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**NATIONAL CONSULTATIVE MEET**

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**ON NETWORKING WITH**

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**NGOs WORKING FOR**

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**CHILDREN AND WOMEN : THE REPORT**

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**DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT**  
MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

**Community Health Cell**  
*Library and Documentation Unit*  
**BANGALORE**

**National Consultative Meet on Networking with NGOs  
Working for Children and Women : The Report**

**26-27 October 1995**

**NIPCCD, New Delhi**



**NGO Cell**

**Department of Women and Child Development**

**Ministry of Human Resource Development**

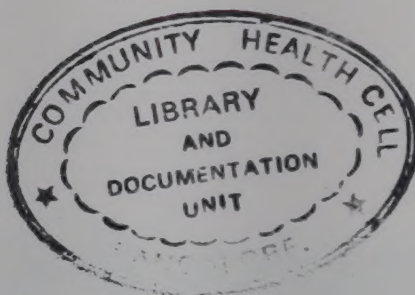
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# Content

	Page
1. Introduction	1
2. The National Consultative Meet	2
3. Main Recommendations	8
4. Inaugural Address	15
5. Discussion Papers	
5.1 Government-NGO Network for Development of Children & Women : The Need	17
5.2 Strengthening Inter-departmental and Government-NGO Linkages for Integrated Women and Child Development	29
5.3 Networking for Promotion of Child Health and Nutrition	47
5.4 Community Mobilisation and Empowerment for Child Survival, Protection and Development : An Experience of Ramakrishna Mission Lokasiksha Parishad in Health and Sanitation	57
5.5 Constraints in Implementing Government Schemes and Programmes	71
5.6 Formulating Proposals for Financial Assistance for Projects Related to Welfare and Development of Children and Women	75
5.7 Role of Media for Child Survival, Protection and Development	79
5.8 Experiences in Child Welfare - (Case Studies) Butterflies : A Case Study	83
5.9 Activities of National Rural Development Society (NRDS)	95
Appendices	
Appendix (i) Programme Schedule	103
Appendix (ii) List of Participants	108
Appendix (iii) List of Background Material	122

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## INTRODUCTION

In the present scenario, voluntary sector has emerged as a valuable asset to the Government in implementing welfare and development programmes for children and women. They have grown in number and influence, and their potential to promote social mobilisation and participation in the process of social development has been well recognised. NGOs, assuming the role as a catalyst for development and social change, have enhanced their own standing in the changing Indian scenario. Currently, in India more than one lakh NGOs are involved in diverse activities including development programmes, welfare activities, sensitising, organising, and mobilising people at the village community level. The Eighth Five Year Plan specifically points out that in the area of social welfare, voluntary organisations will be encouraged and assisted to work in partnership with the State agencies. In the area of child welfare and development, NGOs have always been partners of the Government. In the interest of further promoting partnership between the Government and NGOs in this area, there is a need to set up common forums for exchange of information, work out modalities for sharing of resources, experiences and expertise; and evolve strategies and guiding principles for community empowerment through participatory processes leading to social change.

With this in view, the Department of Women and Child Development has set up a system of networking with NGOs under a project entitled **Networking with NGOs Working for Children and Women** with UNICEF assistance. The networking system aims to have not only a sustained system for two way flow of information from the voluntary sector to a nodal point in the Government sector, but also envisages to develop modalities to strengthen the ongoing programmes for children and women, and identify innovative and replicable community based approaches for child development.

In order to facilitate the process of networking, **NGO Cell** has been set up at the National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPCCD). NGO Cell is making efforts to maximise the reach of the networking system; strengthen the system for exchange of information, resources, innovative experiences, etc.; set up a data base, enquiry and redressal system for NGOs; and promote innovative interventions for the survival, protection and development of children with the support of NGOs in the area of maternal and child health, nutrition and education; etc. NGO Cell also brings out NGOs Newsletter Sampark - a biannual publication in English and Hindi. Presently, about 1,500 NGOs working for children and women are part of the networking system.



## THE NATIONAL CONSULTATIVE MEET

A Two Day National Consultative Meet was organised by the Institute from 26-27 October 1995 at New Delhi. The main objectives of the Consultative Meet were to strengthen the system of networking with NGOs working for children and women by evolving modalities for a two - way interaction; identify areas and scope of interaction between the Department of Women and Child Development and NGOs; promote sharing of experiences in innovative approaches in delivery of services in the areas of health, nutrition and education and draw lessons with a view to strengthen ICDS programme; and assess the information needs of all concerned and standardize the indicators of Voluntary Sector Database.

The Consultative Meet had the benefit of 90 delegates comprising representatives of national level NGOs; officials of the Department of Women and Child Development and other Ministries/Departments working for children and women, representatives of international agencies and subject experts. The NGO representatives were from various States/UTs namely Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chandigarh, Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Manipur, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

### Inaugural Session

The Meet was inaugurated by Kum. Vimla Verma, Minister of State, Department of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Human Resource Development. Dr. Sarala Gopalan, Secretary, DWCD presided over the inaugural session. Dr. Jon Rohde, UNICEF Country Representative was a special invitee. Dr Adarsh Sharma, Director I/C NIPCCD welcomed the chief guest and the distinguished participants of the Meet.

Kum. Vimla Verma, Minister of State, released the special issue of NGOs Newsletter Sampark brought out to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of ICDS. In her inaugural address, she emphasised that active involvement and participation of NGOs in Government efforts has accelerated the process of social change and development in a constructive manner. Their role in implementing programmes, conducting research, organising training, creating awareness, educating people and building-up an environment for social change has been commendable. Today,



their participation in Government programmes is considered to be of utmost importance. She emphatically pointed out that the need of the hour is Government-NGO partnership in action to materialise the commitments made at the national and international levels for child survival and development. She was also of the view that the best approach in this direction is of developing a system for closer interaction, resolving constraints and mobilising all concerned with children and women.

**Dr. Adarsh Sharma**, Director I/C NIPCCD welcomed the Chief Guest and the distinguished participants of the Consultative Meet. She emphasised that NGOs have been a valuable asset to the Government and have played a prominent role in mobilising communities for self reliance and sustained development. There has been a visible shift in the Government policies towards NGOs, and this initiative to work together as partners in the field of social welfare is a historical landmark in itself. In the present scenario, effective partnership between the Government and NGOs is essential to meet the objectives laid down in the National Plan of Action for Children. While welcoming Dr. Rohde, she thanked UNICEF for the generous support to Networking Project, which is a testimony to UNICEF's beliefs and conviction in promoting partnership between Government and NGOs for social change and development.

**Dr. (Smt.) Sarala Gopalan**, Secretary, DWCD, in the opening session stressed the need for NGOs to strengthen themselves and build up the capacity of the communities to participate in the development process. Through networking, NGOs can exchange experiences so as to improve the delivery system; introduce cost-effective methods for delivery of services; and avoid duplication, leakage and wastage of resources. She emphasised the need to set definite and reachable goals, work unitedly and diligently with accelerated speed, and take practical strides to achieve all targets set for the year 2000 A.D in the area of education, health, infant mortality, malnutrition, etc. Further, it is important to stress on the quality of services delivered. The Newsletter Sampark is one way of bringing people and their thoughts together and for disseminating messages. But, there is a need to disseminate information on a larger scale. Now, with Government-NGO partnership we should march forward, understand issues and find solutions to problems. She felt that deliberations at this Meet would help in understanding the shortcomings, and set guidelines and a code of behaviour which should be observed by all. She concluded that miracles are performed by small efforts of a large number of people which leads to positive development.



**Dr. Jon Rohde**, UNICEF, Country Representative, in his address was of the view that the word networking has become well known recently. The goals expressed by UN 50 years ago will be realised 50 years hence and the process of networking is central to realizing these goals. In this participatory process of development, the role of NGOs is essential and critical. There is a need for the Government to provide infrastructure, facilities and resources to the community in a meaningful way for sustained development. He further pointed out that though legislations exist to protect people's rights, they have yet to be internalized and used effectively for which education is imperative. He was of the view that the very root of progress is education, where people are informed, able to exchange information and participate actively in the development process. Plans of action for development should not be merely a blueprint or an outline of goals suggested by the Government, rather it should be formulated subsequent to discussions between the community and the Government. Without networking, both the Government and NGOs would be less than successful. He felt that the goals for the year 2000 are ambitious, but they represent the rights of the next generation and it is for everybody to put in their best efforts to achieve them.

**Smt. Rita Punhani**, Deputy Director, NIPCCD proposed vote of thanks saying that through the system of networking, Government-NGO partnership is being put into action for creating an environment favourable for the holistic development of children and women.

### **Technical Sessions**

The **theme** of the Consultative Meet was discussed in **seven technical sessions**. In each of the technical sessions, the resource persons made presentation on the sub-themes which were followed by discussion among the participants under the Chairmanship of eminent persons. A few NGOs presented case studies of innovative programmes/projects undertaken by them. In addition, there were group discussions and a brainstorming session. The details of technical sessions are as given below -

#### **Session I : Networking with NGOs Working for Children and Women : Some Conceptual Issues**

Chairperson : Smt. Vidyaben Shah  
Chairman,  
Central Social Welfare Board  
New Delhi.



Resource person: Smt. Binoos Sen  
Joint Secretary  
Department of Women & Child Development  
New Delhi.

Dr. S.Y. Quraishi  
Joint Secretary  
Department of Youth Affairs and Sports  
New Delhi.

**Session II : Areas and Scope of Networking with NGOs : A Brainstorming Session.**

Chairperson : Shri Rajesh Tandon  
Director  
Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA)  
New Delhi

**Session III : Intervention Programmes by Voluntary Sector for Development of Children and Women**

Chairperson : Dr. M. Khalakdina

Resource person: Dr. Arun Gupta  
National Co-ordinator (BPNI)  
Breastfeeding Promotion  
Network of India  
New Delhi

Prof. S. Chakravorty  
Director  
Ramakrishna Mission Lokasiksha  
Parishad,  
Narendrapur  
West Bengal

**Session IV : Schemes and Programmes for Children and Women**

Chairperson : Smt. Binoos Sen  
Joint Secretary  
Department of Women & Child Development  
New Delhi.

Resource person : Smt. C. R. Chibber  
Director (Admn.)  
Department of Women & Child Development  
New Delhi.

Shri Vijay Bhaskar  
Deputy Secretary  
Department of Women & Child Development  
New Delhi.

Dr. S.N. Chaudhuri  
Director  
Child In Need Institute (CINI)  
Village - Amgachi  
West Bengal.

Shri Nagendra Nath  
Joint Director  
NIPCCD.  
New Delhi.

**Session V : Role of Media for Child Survival, Protection  
and Development.**

Chairperson : Dr. S.Y. Quraishi  
Joint Secretary  
Department of Youth Affairs  
and Sports  
New Delhi.

Resource person: Prof. J S Yadava  
Director  
Indian Institute of Mass Communication  
New Delhi.

**Session VI : An Experience in Child Welfare : Case Studies**

Resource person : Dr. Rita Panicker Pinto  
Director  
BUTTERFLIES  
New Delhi.

Dr A K Sinha  
Director  
National Rural Development Society  
Patna.

**Session VII : Suggestions and Recommendations for  
Strengthening Government-NGO Network :  
Group Discussion**

Chairperson : Dr. Adarsh Sharma  
Additional Director  
NIPCCD  
New Delhi.

In each of the above technical sessions, efforts were made to arrive at certain conclusions and recommendations which would further help in strengthening Government-NGO partnership.

Smt. Binoo Sen, Joint Secretary, DWCD gave the valedictory address.

## Evaluation

At the end of the deliberations, the programme was evaluated by delegates on the prescribed proforma. All the participants endorsed the excellent decision taken by the Department of Women and Child Development to set up a system of networking with NGOs. The documentation material given was found to be very good and useful. The technical sessions were found to be very useful.

All the participants felt that the subjects were well covered inspite of limited time allotted. The participants were satisfied with the logistic arrangements. However, a majority of them felt that the duration of the Meet should have been three days. Participants have expressed their desire to have more such Meets in future.

The **present report** contains the Inaugural address of Kum. Vimla Verma, Minister of State, Department of Women and Child Development; recommendations; technical papers presented by the resource persons; list of participants; programme schedule; and list of background material circulated during the Meet.



## MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. NGO Cell - Administrative and Organizational Set-up

1.1 There is a need to strengthen and institutionalise NGO Cell.

1.2 There is a need to develop decentralised networking system. Nodal or coordinating units may be set up at the regional and State levels. As NGOs working for children and women work at all levels of the Government set-up, this collaborative GO-NGO relationship has to be built-up at all the levels on the basis of objective understanding of each other in conceptualisation, planning and execution of women and child development programmes.

1.3 The Department of Women and Child Development (DWCD) may strengthen the system of GO-NGO Network by broadening the activities of NGO Cell.

1.4 To sustain the functioning of NGO Cell, financial and manpower requirements may be worked out. If required, NGOs may be approached to support some of the activities of NGO Cell.

1.5 The process of networking with NGOs may be strengthened through partnership in action. NGOs should be involved in the planning of networking system.

1.6 A Core Group may be constituted to facilitate the functioning of NGO Cell. A meeting may be held to decide on organisational structure, functions and operational modalities of NGO Cell.

1.7 Representatives of NGOs may be identified to be the coordinators to support NGO Cell to promote activities in the area of training, production of training material, action research, community based interventions, communication, documentation and dissemination of information, etc.

1.8 DWCD may have Enquiry and Redressal System for NGOs to address their grievances and problems, so that elements of conflict, if any, between the Government and NGOs can be replaced by professionalism and openness for effective implementation of the programmes.

1.9 The NGO network initiative of DWCD should be given full support by all Ministries/Departments working for children and women.

## 2. Functions of NGO Cell

2.1 NGO Cell may develop efficient Management Information System to -

- i) provide access to information, and
- ii) retrieve and disseminate information

2.2 Computerisation of information in NGO Cell is essential for effective information retrieval and dissemination.

2.3 Modalities for sharing of information between the Government and NGOs, among NGOs and also among Government organisations working for children and women may be developed after assessing the information needs.

2.4 NGO Cell may organise regional and State level workshops/consultative meets to maximise the reach of networking system.

2.5 NGO Cell may promote analysis, documentation and operation research of innovative experiences, along with sharing of resources, expertise, technical knowhow, etc. among NGOs.

2.6 NGO Cell should be recognised as the nodal point for coordinating communication activities related to women and child development.

2.7 NGO Cell through its decentralised infrastructure should disseminate information about Government programmes and guidelines for financial assistance to NGOs at district/village/grassroots levels and to those located in remote areas.

2.8 NGO Cell may develop linkages with umbrella NGOs having a system of networking.

2.9 NGO Cell may promote coordination, linkages and information sharing among NGOs working in the same area.

2.10 NGO Cell may prepare a directory of NGOs by categorizing the organisations by major area of work.

2.11 In NGOs Newsletter Sampark, one page or at least one column may be earmarked for each concerned Department to ensure that no department goes by default. The frequency should be increased to once a month as soon as possible. Since the ultimate impact must be felt at the grassroots level, every State and district should be encouraged to bring out its own local edition.

2.12 NGO Cell may strengthen its enquiry and redressal system to meet the needs of NGOs.



2.13 NGO Cell may develop Voluntary Sector Data Base, based on the needs of NGOs, GOs and all concerned with networking system.

### **3. Coordination with Planning Commission and National Informatics Centre**

3.1 National Informatics Centre (NIC) can play a useful role in sharing information through NICNET. Its Database should be available to all concerned Departments for on-line searches. A Local or Wide Area Network (LAN/WAN) should be specifically devised for information sharing. It will also obviate double funding of NGOs and duplication of efforts.

3.2 A committee may be set up to identify potential NGOs who can avail NICNET facilities. Information needs of these NGOs and utilisation of the information from NICNET may be ascertained.

3.3 NIC may extend the NICNET facilities to NGOs working for children and women on chargeable basis as per their norms. Information available through NICNET may be listed and shared with NGOs.

3.4 Concept paper on participation of voluntary agencies in different sectors may be developed, as a follow up of March 1994 meeting chaired by the Prime Minister, by constituting a Core Group. This may be coordinated by the Voluntary Action Cell in the Planning Commission. The Core Group will include National NGO Networking Coordinator/Sub Group Coordinators/Facilitators and will be formulated through a process of consultation.

3.5 Modalities to exchange information between Planning Commission and NGO Cell/NGOs may be worked out.

3.6 NGO Cell may be able to provide data to Voluntary Sector Database in the Planning Commission. Indicators on which the data is required may be listed. As Voluntary Sector Database of NGO Cell is being set-up, a list of indicators of the Database of the Planning Commission may be taken into consideration.

### **4. Strengthening the Government-NGO Network**

4.1 Government and NGOs must undertake self analysis to determine the individual and collective strengths and weaknesses, and what contributions and support they need and can give to each other. This would involve **developing modalities and strategies** especially for the following areas of interaction -



- i) two-way flow of information between the Government and NGOs, among NGOs and also among Government organisations working for children and women,
- ii) access and availability of information about NGOs and Government programmes at one place,
- iii) sharing of resources, expertise, technical know how, etc,
- iv) inter-departmental linkages in the government sector,
- v) linkages with umbrella NGOs,
- vi) enquiry and redressal system,
- vii) availability of funds,
- viii) Voluntary Sector Data Base, and
- ix) dissemination of information.

4.2 Set-up mechanism for closer interaction between DWCD and NGOs right from the national level to the panchayat level. There should be opportunities for closer interaction among NGOs working in rural areas.

4.3 Role of DWCD and NGOs, and areas and scope of interaction may be clearly defined and understood in the networking system.

4.4 NGOs should set parameters for networking so that this could lead to long term commitments.

4.5 Orientation of NGOs on issues related to children and women is important for making networking more effective.

4.6 NGOs can strengthen GO-NGO Network by increasing the reach, visibility and utilisation of Government programmes through advocacy and social mobilisation.

4.7 NGOs have been instrumental in providing training to AWWs. They should be more actively involved in imparting training and should send their suggestions to improve and strengthen it.

4.8 NGOs have been known for initiating community based innovative schemes. They should share their experiences with DWCD through Sampark or during regional meets, so that it will help the Government in planning future programmes.

4.9. NGOs should support DWCD in convergence of efforts and resources, both financial and human to the maximum, so that Government and Non-Government sectors work together for children and women.

4.10 A system may be evolved to involve NGOs to be the watch dog for child welfare activities.

4.11 NGOs should support the Government by lobbying with competent bodies to introduce mid-course corrections and intervention programmes for children and women.

4.12 For accountability of NGOs, a proper monitoring and evaluation system needs to be developed by the NGOs themselves.

4.13 Efforts should be made to review rules and regulations for smooth interaction, project formulation and sanctioning grants.

4.14 NGOs should be involved in identifying and documenting community based intervention programmes.

4.15 Government agencies may treat NGOs in proper perspective. It is felt that only NGOs are black listed while there are no checks for government functionaries. If effective partnership is to be expected, then the existing attitude of Government functionaries needs a dramatic change. Government may consider including NGOs in the committees related to formulation of policies and programmes for children and women.

4.16 NGOs do not wish to be at the receiving end. They should be involved in the networking system right from the planning stage itself process.

4.17 Government programmes may be made more flexible for introducing area-specific innovative interventions by NGOs, as this is the felt need expressed by NGOs.

4.18 NGOs can support the Government in realising the national goals related to health, nutrition and education through the following activities -

4.18.1 Promoting democratic process of participatory development and commitment, and building up a self-reliant society through advocacy, awareness building, conscientisation and community empowerment.

4.18.2 Reminding Government of the commitments made.

4.18.3 Sensitising administrators, NGOs, police, judiciary, professionals, social workers and the community.

4.18.4 Promoting economic and social empowerment of women through provision of easy credit, skill training, increased income earning opportunity, support services, child care and nutrition services, etc.

4.18.5 Involving experienced NGOs in the training of all those who deal with NGOs at various levels and also of NGOs including those in remote areas in the context of national development goals.

4.18.6 Informing people of the existing legal provisions, spreading legal literacy, and explaining the laws as well as structures and methods of administration of justice in a simplified way.

4.18.7 Monitoring and alerting the public of the changing situation of children and women, and the services available for their welfare and development.

4.18.8 Educating parents on the issues concerning children. Performing the role of effective communicators and change agents.

4.18.9 Lobbying with competent bodies and persons to take corrective action.

4.18.10 Promoting convergence of services with community as the focus for development of children and women.

## **5. Strengthening Inter-departmental Linkages**

5.1 DWCD may develop inter-departmental linkages with the Government Ministries and Departments working for children and women.

5.2 NGO Cell may be recognised as the nodal point for strengthening inter-departmental linkages.

5.3 A detailed time-bound study may be undertaken to analyse the current situation, and identify the areas for synergy or coordination among various Government Departments/Ministries working for children and women. Reporting and monitoring proformae may be evolved to make the linkages a reality.

5.4 An Inter-departmental Committee may be constituted, headed by the Secretary, DWCD with representatives of other Departments of the level of Joint Secretary. It must meet once every quarter.

5.5 The Inter-departmental coordination mechanism should be evolved at all levels of planning, implementation and grassroots level delivery to support NGO Cell in its functioning.



5.6 A department-wise checklist of action to be taken as per the decision taken in the child related policy documents should be prepared, followed up, and jointly reviewed and monitored. Similar action should be taken regarding women's development programmes.

5.7 All the Departments working for children and women have their own numerous deliberative bodies/committees. The list of such committees should be exchanged, and all the departments should identify areas of their concern and interest, so that they could be appointed to the concerned committees.

## **6. General**

6.1 DWCD should make efforts to check double/multiple funding to NGOs.

6.2 DWCD may consider the recommendations made in the report by the Core Group of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare for promoting and strengthening inter-departmental communication activities.

6.3 In areas where there are no NGOs, efforts should be made by DWCD to set up new NGOs by identifying motivated volunteers and bringing them together to form a society. They could be trained in the entire operation of NGOs its registration, project formulation, accounting, implementation, monitoring and report writing. An inventory of all programmes should be made available to them, so that they could match the local needs with the existing programmes.

6.4 Local institutions like Mahila Mandals and Youth Clubs should be strengthened and energised by DWCD. They can play a crucial role in achieving synergy, monitoring the performance of the local functionaries and community mobilisation.



# INAUGURAL ADDRESS

By

Kum. Vimla Verma  
Hon'able Minister of State for  
Women and Child Development

Today I am very happy to be among a distinguished gathering of eminent professionals, senior administrators, UNICEF representatives and officials of voluntary organisations who are here to share their views on the subject, which is the need of the hour, i.e Networking with NGOs working for children and women. NGOs have been our partners in the process of development of children and women since the beginning. Their active involvement and participation in Government efforts has accelerated the process of social change and development in a constructive manner. They have the potential to carry our programmes to the masses and reach the unreached. Being nearer to the masses, they are in a better position to mobilise community resources and promote community participation and social learning. Their role in implementing programmes, conducting research, organising training, creating awareness, educating people and building-up an environment for social change has been commendable. Today, their participation in Government programmes is considered to be of utmost importance.

In most of the Government schemes and programmes the role of NGOs has been very clearly defined. This includes Integrated Child Development Services, Mahila Samriddhi Yojana, Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (RMK), Indira Mahila Yojana, etc. Now with emphasis being laid on convergence of inter-sectoral services for women's empowerment, lot of effort will have to be made to develop linkages with various Government Departments and NGOs.

India has committed itself to meet the goals of child survival and development by the turn of the century. By ratifying the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, we have accepted the provisions made in the articles of the Convention. Now the challenge before us is to make efforts to materialise the commitments made at the national and international levels. This task cannot be accomplished by Government alone. We do need active support of non-governmental sector in realising our goals and objectives of 1990s. The need of the hour is Government-NGO partnership in action. The best approach in this direction is of developing a system for closer interaction, resolving constraints and mobilising all concerned with children and women.

I must congratulate the Department of Women and Child Development for taking such a bold step in setting up a system of networking with NGOs under the project Networking with NGOs Working for Children and Women with UNICEF support. The system has clear cut objectives to strengthen the partnership between the Government and NGOs. NGO Cell has been set up in September 1994 in the National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPCCD) to facilitate the process of networking. NIPCCD is an apex body under the aegis of the Department of Women and Child Development and is closely involved in training and research in the field of child development. It has a long association with the NGO sector and voluntary action. The Institute is promoting voluntary action by developing measures for coordination of governmental and voluntary action in social development. By taking a comprehensive view of child development it is constantly developing and promoting programmes in pursuance of the National Policy for Children.

Within a period of one year, the NGO Cell has made active progress in maximising the reach of networking system, and today as can be seen, has been successful in setting up a forum to promote partnership between the Government and NGOs. NGO Cell brings out NGOs Newsletter Sampark - a biannual publication in English and Hindi.

I feel proud today to be the one to release the special issue of NGOs Newsletter Sampark brought out to celebrate the 20th anniversary of ICDS. It is enriched with key communication messages for child survival, protection and development, which if disseminated can surely help us in achieving our goals and objectives.

Friends, I am happy that this Consultative Meet is being organized at the time, when we certainly need to mobilize all our resources to give our children the best they deserve. So let us be together to take our programmes to the height of their success. I am happy to inaugurate the Consultative Meet. I wish it all the success and sincerely hope that its deliberations will strengthen Government and NGOs partnership in ensuring well being of the children and bringing about imperative social change.

## **DISCUSSION PAPERS**





## Government-NGO Network for Development of Children and Women: The Need

\* Bino0 Sen

Non-governmental organisations have emerged as a viable institutional framework to serve as a catalyst for social reorientation. They have grown in number and influence, and have become a key partner in the process of planned development. Their potential to promote social mobilisation and people's participation in the process of social development has been well recognised. Now, NGOs participation is considered a must for the success of any major initiative, both at the national and international levels. Today, the country has roughly about 1,00,000 NGOs.

A large number of NGOs have a long history of being actively involved in the area of child welfare and development. Their dedication, flexibility, commitment, zeal, and ability to mobilise community is responsible for much of the progress made in the situation of children and women.

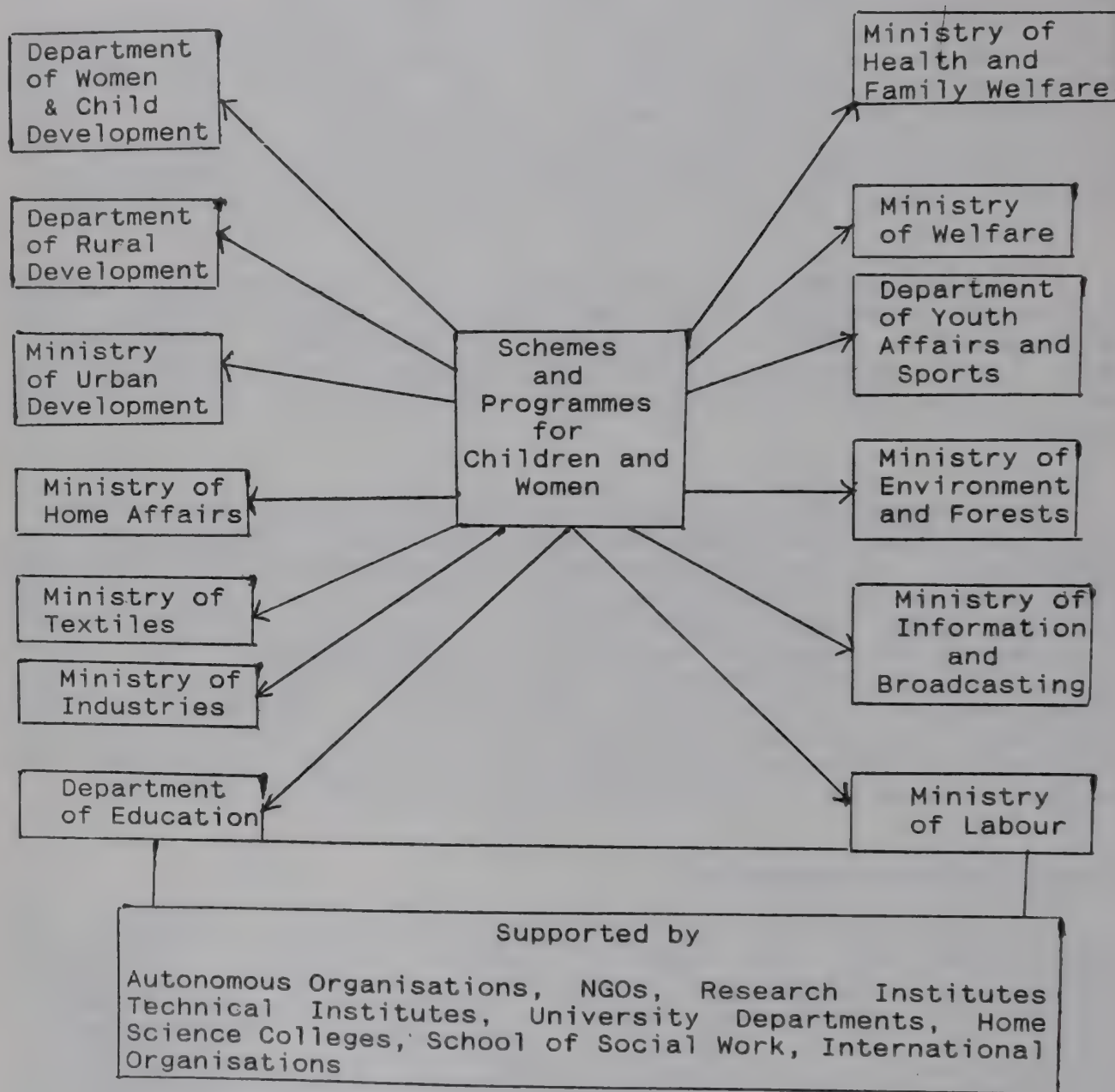
Realising the importance of participatory development, the **Sixth Five Year Plan** document (1980-85) emphasised the importance of non-governmental organisations who could be instrumental in empowering the community. During the **Seventh Five Year Plan** (1985-90), the role of NGOs in the process of development was more clearly defined. They were to supplement and complement the Government efforts so as to offer people choices and alternatives. **Eighth Five Year Plan** specifically pointed out that in the area of social welfare, voluntary organisations will be encouraged and assisted to work in partnership with the State agencies.

### Social Welfare Scenario

During the last few decades, a dramatic change has taken place in the area of social welfare. Programmes concerning children and women have occupied a prominent place in the national plans for human resource development. There have been dramatic **technological developments**, particularly in the area of health, nutrition and education. The **Central plan allocation** for social sector has gone up from Rs. 19 crores during the Second Five Year Plan to Rs. 2375 crores during the Eighth Five Year Plan.

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\* Joint Secretary, Department of Women and Child Development, New Delhi.

Fig. 1. Government Ministries/Departments Working for Children and Women





There has been a gradual **increase** in the number of **Government Ministries/Departments** implementing women and child-oriented programmes. The Department of Women and Child Development, under the Ministry of Human Resource Development is the nodal Department to guide, coordinate and review the efforts of both governmental and non-governmental organisations working for the development of children and women. On the whole, about **13-14 Government Ministries/Departments** are implmenting more than **118 schemes and programmes for children and women**. (Fig. 1) They in turn are supported by autonomous bodies, NGOs, and research and technical institutes.

All this has resulted in the development of a vast Government infrastructure to cater to multi-sectoral and inter-linked needs of children and women who comprise more than 70 per cent of the population. It is encouraging to note that with all these efforts, we have reached a stage where the country has the ability to cater to the basic needs of children, which are relevant for promoting holistic development and full realization of a child's potential. Still, we have a long way to go.

### **Situation of Children and Women**

As per the existing situation, Infant Mortality Rate, the most important indicator of child survival is still at 79 per thousand live births. Out of 25 million children born every year in the country, two million die before reaching the age of one. About 43.8 per cent children suffer from moderate degree of Protein Energy Malnutrition and 8.7 per cent from extreme forms of malnutrition.

Further, about 50 per cent expectant mothers in the third trimester of pregnancy and 56 per cent of pre-school children suffer from iron deficiency. Every year around 60,000 children become blind due to Vitamin A deficiency. Iodine deficiency alone accounts for 90,000 still births and neo-natal deaths every year, and 30 per cent of all infants born in India are low birth weight babies. It is estimated that 48 per cent of the population remains illiterate today and only 52 per cent of enrolled primary school children reach Grade V. There are around 20 million working children in the country. Several million children are also living in especially difficult circumstances. Gender inequality still persists in all sections of the society and the girl child has remained subsumed within the larger framework of women and child development.

As per the existing situation, there is a **marginal gap** between the "existing levels" and the "expected levels" of the set targets related to important indicators of child survival and development. The Government aims to bridge these performance gaps in a phased manner. The strongest mechanism in achieving these goals is **social mobilisation** and massive **advocacy** to empower all sections of society including children. This includes mobilization of all human, financial, material, managerial and technological **resources**, so as to promote transformation of public awareness of the children's needs into demands to be fulfilled on time. There is also a need to **build-up the capacity** of the communities by **empowering mothers** with knowledge related to the means of access to economic sustenance, child survival and development, participatory communication and social equity so that the community is able to assume its primary responsibility of renewing itself through the development of children and virtually eliminate their dependence on outside sources.

Government being fully aware, is making all efforts to improve the situation of children and women in the country. With ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and formulation of the National Plan of Action for Children, efforts are being made to achieve the ambitious and focussed agenda for the well-being of children. With the commitments made, the country has agreed to be guided by the "first call for children" that is "the essential needs of children should be given high priority in the allocation of resources---", and create an environment favourable for children. NGOs have a critical role to play in this endeavour.

Now, the challenge before us is to meet the goals and objectives set to improve the situation of children and women by the turn of the century. The new initiatives taken by the Department of Women and Child Development in this direction include strengthening of **ICDS**-the largest child care intervention programme with maximum outreach; implementing schemes for women's equity and economic security like **Mahila Samridhi Yojana (MSY)** and **Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (RMK)**; and introducing **Indira Mahila Yojana (IMY)** for women's empowerment. IMY is a **strategy** aimed at achieving ultimate empowerment of women by ensuring their direct access to resources through a sustained process of mobilisation and convergence of sectoral programmes to ensure and meet the articulated needs of women in a holistic manner. NGOs, with expertise in the concerned areas functioning at the block/district level, will be identified as Resource Centres to implement this programme.



It is envisaged that India would enter the 21st century, having eliminated the worst forms of deprivation, giving its children the hope and start they need to shape their own future. Unless all those involved with child survival and development are mobilised, the promises and the commitments made at the national and international levels will remain unfulfilled.

## **Government-NGO Partnership and Networking - The Need**

The Government alone can not undertake the task of realising the objectives associated with multi-dimensional and inter-linked needs of children and women. This can not become the sole responsibility of NGOs also. It has to be through **Government-NGO Partnership and Networking in Action**. Further, the strategy of **convergence of services** at the community level would definitely require strong linkages at the block, district, State and Central level among the Government departments as well as NGOs. This calls for a well planned **networking system** for the development of children and women.

In this era of information revolution and advanced communication technology, **networking** has been accepted as the most **cost-effective strategy** to meet the multi-sectoral needs of human development. Network is a form of arrangement or an administrative structure that links a group of individuals or organisations who have agreed to work together for a common cause and share material, financial, technical and human resources to meet the multi-dimensional and inter-linked needs.

In the present situation, the relationship between the Government and NGOs is **strained** by difficulties in negotiations and lack of mutual cooperation. It is felt that both Government and NGOs have certain apprehensions in working closely with each other. The Government sometimes feels that NGOs are implementing programmes with emphasis on quantitative achievements rather than on qualitative ones. At the grassroots level, many NGOs are involved in delivering the same set of services in a community, resulting in duplication of efforts, and wastage of manpower and finances. We agree that there is a need to have a closer and critical look at the existing rules and regulations governing the Government-NGO relationship to work more closely.

## NGO Cell, DWCD

The Department of Women and Child Development has set up a system of networking with NGOs under the project "**Networking with NGOs Working for Children and Women**" with UNICEF support. The networking system aims to develop linkages; have a sustained system for **exchange of information**, experiences and resources; build-up **two way flow of information** from the voluntary sector to a nodal point in the Government sector; develop modalities to **strengthen the ongoing programmes** for children and women; and identify **innovative and replicable** community based approaches for women and child development.

In order to facilitate the process of networking, NGO Cell was set-up at the National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPCCD). The Cell set-up in September 1994, with minimum manpower and facilities is making efforts to -

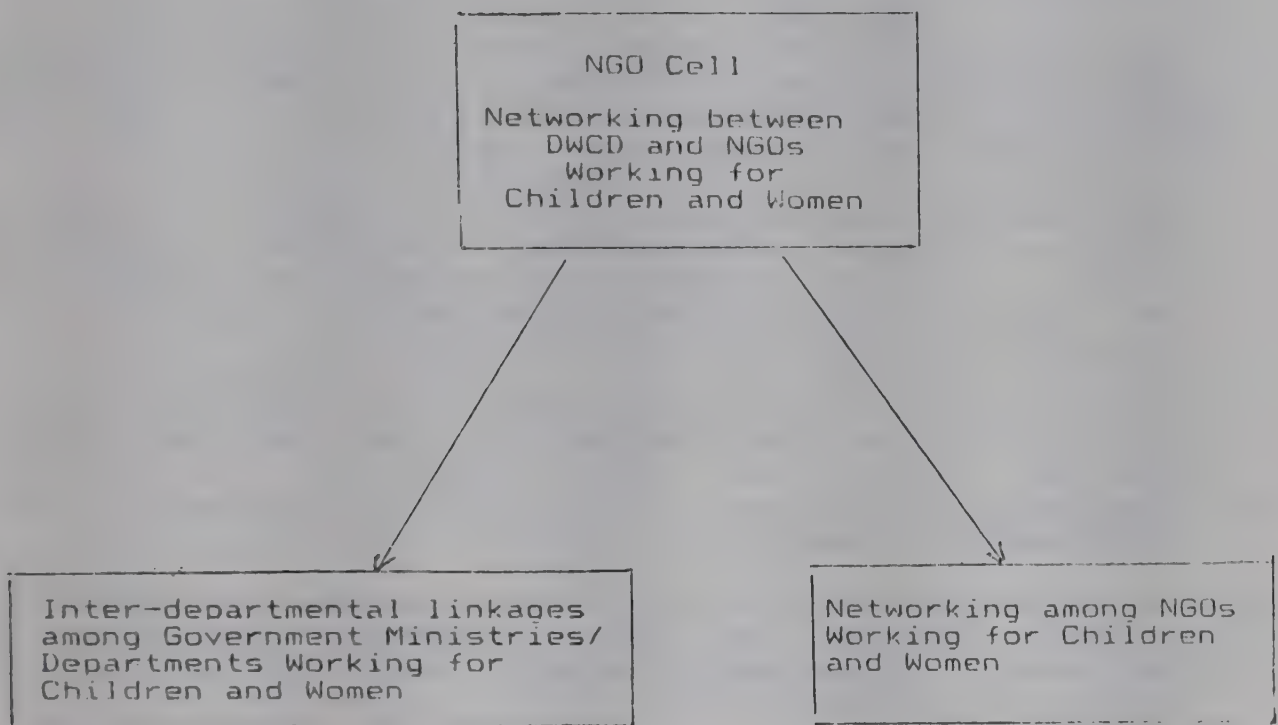
- i) maximise the reach of the networking system;
- ii) strengthen the system for exchange of information, resources, innovative experiences, etc.;
- iii) set up a data base, enquiry and redressal system for NGOs; and
- iv) promote innovative interventions for the survival, protection and development of children with the support of NGOs in the area of maternal and child health, nutrition and education.

NGO Cell should be strengthened to undertake these activities. The **NGOs Newsletter Sampark** is a medium through which we can all share our experiences and achievements. NGO Cell brings out NGOs Newsletter Sampark - a biannual publication in English and Hindi. This newsletter is the medium for exchange of views and experiences between the Government and NGOs. There has been an overwhelming response and appreciation for Sampark from all parts of the country. NGOs commitment to be partners in the networking system is a source of encouragement for us and we are grateful to them for their response and enthusiasm. This has encouraged us to go ahead with our activities to strengthen the GO-NGO network.



The supportive linkages of the networking system as per Fig. 2 need to be strengthened to maximise the reach of the networking system.

Fig. 2. Supportive Linkages of NGOs Networking System  
NGO Cell, Department of Women and Child Development



## Role of DWCD in GO-NGO Network

In concrete operational terms, the role of the Department of Women and Child Development to strengthen GO-NGO network is to

- 1) strengthen the system of GO-NGO Network and broaden the activities of NGO Cell,
- 2) develop inter-departmental linkages with the Government Ministries and Departments working for children and women to support NGO Cell,
- 3) support NGO Cell in developing linkages with umbrella NGOs having a system of networking,
- 4) set-up mechanism for closer interaction between DWCD and NGOs at all levels of the Government set up,
- 5) develop efficient Management Information System through NGO Cell to provide access to information and to monitor the progress made in child survival and development indicators,
- 6) have Enquiry and Redressal System for NGOs to address their grievances and problems, so that elements of conflict, if any, between the Government and NGOs can be replaced by professionalism and openness for effective implementation of programmes,
- 7) make efforts to realise the goals and objectives of the National Plan of Action for Children for child survival, protection and development through its supportive linkages in the Government and non-Government sector,
- 8) strengthen training of all those who deal with NGOs at various levels and also of NGOs in the context of national development goals with the support of experienced NGOs,
- 9) promote convergence of services with community as the focus for development of children and women, and
- 10) support NGOs for advocacy, social mobilisation and community empowerment.



## Role of NGOs in GO-NGO Network

The role of NGOs in strengthening GO-NGO network for development of children and women is to -

- 1) initiate action to support GO-NGO network at all levels of the Government set-up.
- 2) participate meaningfully in the activities of the NGO Cell.
- 3) undertake the following activities to promote child survival and development -
  - i) advocacy, community mobilisation, and empowerment,
  - ii) sensitising administrators, NGOs, police, judiciary, professionals, social workers and the community,
  - iii) reminding Government of the commitments made,
  - iv) informing people of the existing legal provisions, spreading legal literacy and explaining the laws as well as structures and methods of administration of justice in a simplified way,
  - v) educating parents on the issues concerning children,
  - vi) awareness building and conscientisation,
  - vii) monitoring and alerting the public of the changing situation of children and women and the services available for their welfare and development,
  - viii) supporting the Government in achieving the national goals related to health, nutrition and education,
  - ix) helping the economic and social empowerment of women through provision of easy credit, skill training, increased income earning opportunity, support services, child care and nutrition services,
  - x) creating an environment for behavioural change,
  - xi) performing the role of effective communicators and change agents,
  - xii) developing communication software,
  - xiii) lobbying with competent bodies and persons to take corrective action,
  - xiv) promoting democratic process of participatory development and commitment for building up a self-reliant society.

## Recommendations

The Department of Women and Child Development has taken the first step to initiate the system of networking with NGOs with well defined objectives. Now it is for the NGOs to come forward to support and strengthen the system. The system of networking can be strengthened only if NGOs and the Government come forward together to contribute in this endeavour. The various suggestions to strengthen GO-NGO Network are -

1. Government and NGOs must undertake self analysis to determine the individual and collective strengths and weaknesses, and what contributions and support they need and can give to each other. This would involve **developing modalities and strategies** especially for the following areas of interaction -
  - i) two-way flow of information between the Government and NGOs, among NGOs and also among Government Organisations working for children and women,
  - ii) access and availability of information about NGOs and Government programmes at one place,
  - iii) sharing of resources, expertise, technical know how, etc,
  - iv) inter-departmental linkages in the government sector,
  - v) linkages with umbrella NGOs,
  - vi) enquiry and redressal system,
  - vii) availability of funds,
  - viii) voluntary sector data base,
  - ix) dissemination of information.
2. There is a need to strengthen NGO Cell and develop a decentralised networking system. As NGOs working for children and women work at all levels of the Government set-up, this collaborative GO-NGO relationship has to be built-up at all levels on the basis of objective understanding of each other in conceptualisation, planning and execution of women and child development programmes.



3. Government and NGOs should understand their role fully in the GO-NGO network and initiate action to implement these programmes.

4. NGO Cell can maximise the reach of networking system by organising regional and State level consultative meets.

5. NGOs can strengthen GO-NGO Network by increasing the reach, visibility and utilisation of Government programmes through advocacy and social mobilisation.

6. NGOs have been instrumental in providing training to AWWs. They should be more actively involved in training and should send their suggestions to improve and strengthen it.

7. NGOs should be involved more in implementing ICDS programme. Efforts should be made to allot more ICDS projects to NGOs.

8. Now the focus in ICDS programme is on 0-3 yrs children. NGOs should come forward to meet the health and nutritional needs of this group.

9. NGOs should undertake more projects under National Creche Fund Scheme for welfare of women especially those working in the unorganised sector.

10. NGOs should contribute towards National Creche Fund, so that it further helps women to use their potential to the maximum advantage.

11. NGOs have been known for initiating community based innovative schemes. They should share their experiences with us through Sampark or during regional meets, so that it will help the Government in planning their future programmes.

12. NGOs should support the Government in convergence of efforts and resources, both financial and human to the maximum, so that Government and Non-Government sectors work together for children and women.

13. Efforts should be made to review our rules and regulations for smooth interaction, project formulation and sanctioning grants.

14. NGOs should support the Government by lobbying with competent bodies to introduce mid-course corrections and intervention programmes for children and women.

15. NICNET facility of NIC is being made available to NGOs also. We should make efforts to have information about NGOs working for children and women through NIC.

To conclude, networking underlines the seriousness in recognising the simple truism that unity is strength, that in togetherness we can multiply our activities to influence not only official policies but can also reach more people and have better impact to mobilise the community to ensure child survival and development. I am sure being together, we will be able to make significant strides towards ensuring a better future for our children.



## Strengthening Inter-Departmental and Govt-NGO Linkages for Integrated Women and Child Development

\* Dr. S.Y. Quraishi

Women and children constitute nearly 70 per cent of the country's population. Their condition, therefore reflects the status of the health of the nation. All the development indicators show that the condition of these two segments of the population in India is not satisfactory. A very high rate of infant mortality and morbidity, malnutrition, poor educational status and high rate of school dropouts are some of the problems which characterise the status of children in India. The condition of children is organically linked with that of women, particularly mothers. Here too, the situation is quite dismal. If one single indicator tells the tale of the poor status of women in India, it is the population ratio, which not only is adverse for women but has kept going down throughout the century. It is a direct result of high female mortality on account of sheer gender discrimination and neglect. In the entire gamut of development, including agriculture, rural development, education, health, nutrition and family welfare, etc., women are completely sidelined.

It is not that the government has been oblivious to the situation. Steps have been taken to remedy the situation and a multitude of programmes have been initiated, particularly during the last two decades. Public concern for the social sector is reflected from a phenomenal increase in Plan allocations which have gone up from Rs.400 crores in the First Five Year Plan to Rs.24,000 crores in the Eighth Five Year Plan - an increase of 17,800%! Despite this, hardly any socio-economic indicator has shown even 100% improvement, except for literacy which has improved by 285% (Table 1).

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\* Joint Secretary, Department of Youth Affairs and Sports,  
Ministry of Human Resource Development, New Delhi

Table 1

## Demographic Indicators Through Four Decades (1951-91)

Indicators	1951	1991	Improvement (%)
Literacy rate	18.33	52.11	+284.3
Death rate	22.8 (1951-61)	9.2 (1994)	- 59.6
Birth rate	41.7 (1951-61)	28.6 (1994)	- 31.4
Infant mortality rate	129 (1971)	73 (1994)	- 43.4
Low birth-weight babies	60% (1985)	30% (1992-93)	- 50
Severe malnutrition	8.1 (1975-79)	8.7 (1988-90)	+ 7.4

The number of schemes/programmes for women and children is nearly 120 being implemented by as many as 11 Ministries/Departments (Table 2).

Table 2

## Number of Schemes of Different Departments/Ministries

Name of the Ministry/Department	No. of Schemes
Department of Women & Child Development	33
Ministry of Health & Family Welfare 14+25	39
Ministry of Welfare	19
Department of Education	17
Department of Culture	2
Department of Agriculture	3
Ministry of Food	13
Department of Rural Development	8
Ministry of Environment	8
Ministry of Labour	4
Ministry of Railways	2
Total	118

Besides these, the following Departments also have schemes affecting women and children:

1. Department of Youth Affairs & Sports
2. Department of Small Scale Industries and Agro and Rural Industries
3. Ministry of Non-conventional Energy Sources
4. Department of Biotechnology
5. Ministry of Textiles
6. Ministry of Labour
7. Ministry of Water Resources



This clearly shows that it is not lack of programmes which is responsible for poor status of women and children. It will not be off the mark to say that the greatest contributing factor is the lack of proper linkages and co-ordination among various Departments and Ministries on the one hand, and the Government and the NGOs on the other. Another factor is weak communication support which also suffers from poor co-ordination and linkages.

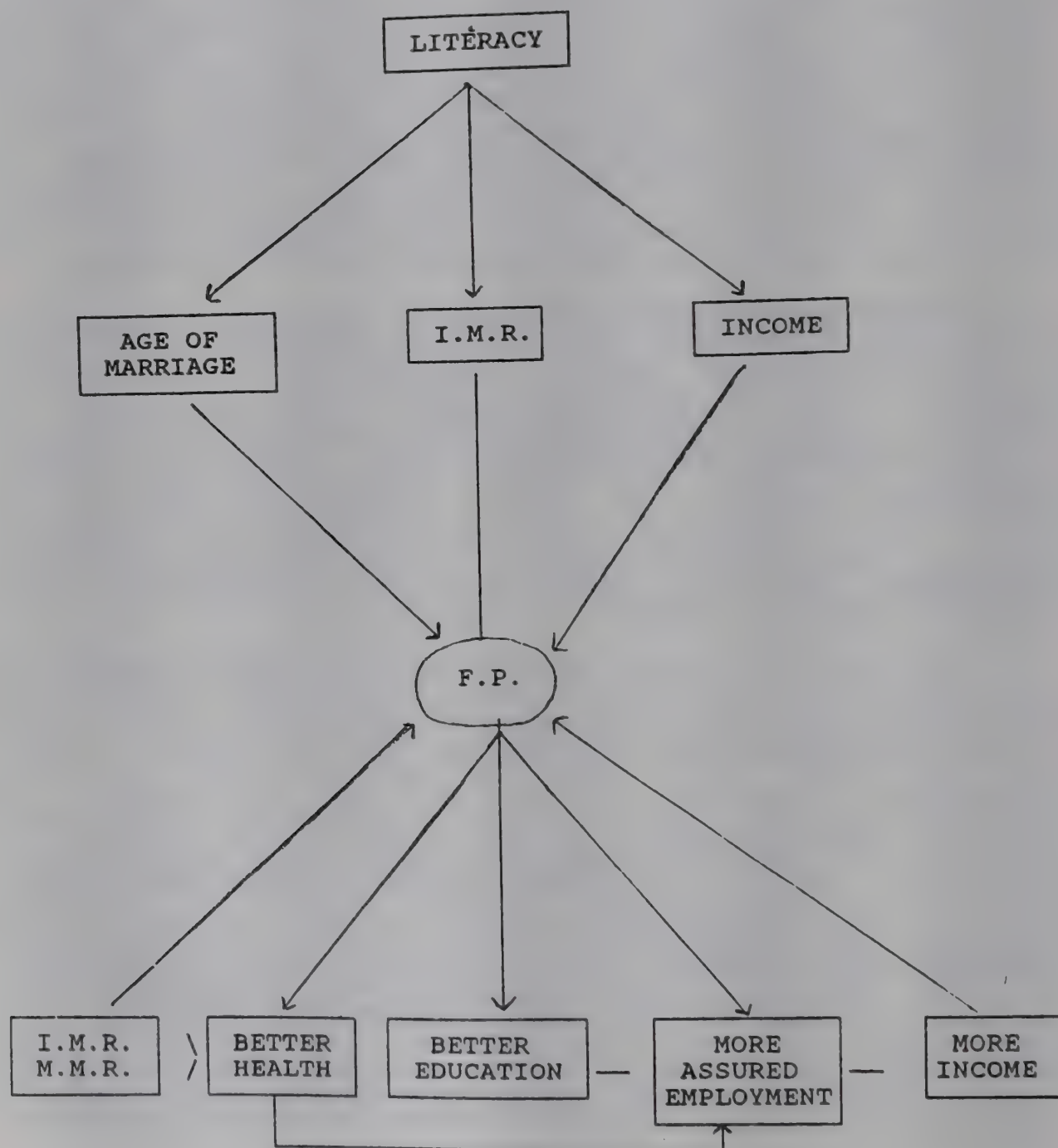
Factors like literacy, poverty and health have a bearing on child survival, status of women and family planning. The interdependence of important **factors** in development can be seen from **Fig.1**, which shows that with the level of literacy, the age of marriage is delayed, IMR is reduced and income increases. In turn, all these three factors contribute to higher acceptance of family planning, which has a positive bearing on MMR, better health of women, better education, greater income, etc. The programmes for literacy, health, income generation, etc., can therefore, not be considered in isolation, but have to be viewed in a holistic and integrated manner. This establishes the need for linkages and co-ordination among various Departments.

Inter-dependence of the various **sectors** of development can be seen from **Fig.2**, which clearly shows how one sector is the concern of several Departments. For example, literacy is not the exclusive concern of the Department of Education alone, but is also of the Department of Women and Child Development, Department of Youth Affairs & Sports, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Ministry of Rural Development, Ministry of Urban Development, Ministry of Labour, etc. Similarly, income generation is the concern of several departments/Ministries like Agriculture, Rural Development, Industry, Labour, Wasteland Development, Forest and Environment and DWCD.

The point of concern is that when so many Departments are involved in one subject, what linkage and co-ordination mechanism exists among the various Departments. While DWCD is the nodal department for welfare and development of women and children, the role and responsibility of other Departments is no less. In fact, in terms of budget, the role of many of them is far greater than that of DWCD. There is no institutionalised linkage and co-ordination mechanism, except an occasional meeting between two or more Departments on some specific issue. There is no joint planning or joint monitoring or joint review, either by the concerned Departments or even by the Planning Commission. In this context, it is encouraging that in the Eighth Plan Document's Chapter on the 'Objectives, Thrust and Macro-dimensions of the Eighth Plan', the Planning Commission commits itself to 'henceforth play an integrative role and help in the development of a holistic approach to the policy formulation in areas like human resource

FIG - 1

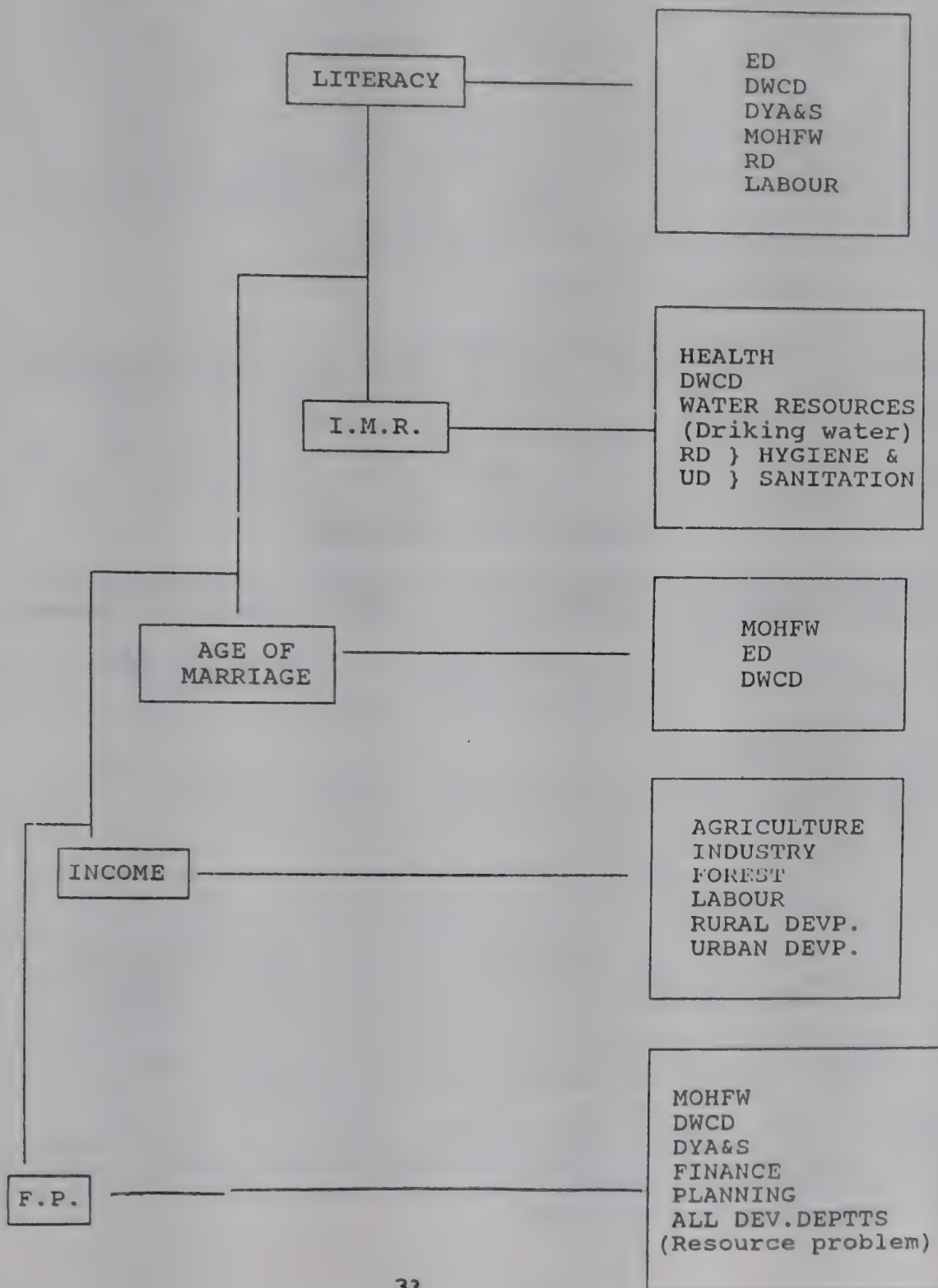
Inter-dependence of Demographic Factors





F I G - 2

INTER-DEPENDENCE OF DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS  
AND DEVELOPMENT SECTORS



development, backward areas, etc., besides playing an information dissemination role'. One of the four areas of focus is the creation of appropriate organisations in delivery systems to ensure that the benefits of investment in the social sectors reached the intended beneficiaries. The Plan also commits that human resource development will be the main focus of the Eighth Plan. It is towards this elementary goal that employment generation, population control, literacy, education, health, drinking water and provision of adequate food and basic infrastructure are listed as the priorities. In view of the inter-dependence of all these factors/sectors as we have already seen above, the synergistic delivery of these programmes and services is essential for optimum results. It is however distressing to note that this "integrative role" is yet to turn from a pious intention to discernible action.

### ICDS : A Coordination Model

In the overall dismal scenario, at least one programme the ICDS - has attempted a model of inter-departmental co-ordination. One look at Table 3 shows how the six basic services cut across Departmental boundaries.

Table 3

#### Basic ICDS Services

Areas of Inter-departmental Concern		ICDS	Health	Education
1.	SNP			-
2.	Immunisation			-
3.	Health Check-up			-
4.	Referral Services			-
5.	Nutrition & Health Education			
6.	Preschool Education		-	

Moreover, it is very significant that the objectives of the ICDS list co-ordination as one of the **objectives** - not only a means to an end, but an end in itself. Anganwadi is the focal point of delivery of services which used to be the concern of several Departments earlier, namely (1) nutrition (Food and Agriculture), (2) immunisation (Health), (3) health check up and referral services (Health) (4) health and nutrition education (Adult Education & Health), (5) population awareness (MOHFW), (6) hygiene and sanitation (Public Health), (7) safe drinking water (Public Health), etc. The following areas of co-ordination between ICDS and Health are clearly envisaged.



- (i) Regular visits of ANM/LHV/MO to the Anganwadis
- (ii) Adequate supply of vaccines and drugs
- (iii) Prompt attention to referral cases
- (iv) Assisting Anganwadi Workers in HNE.

The co-ordination mechanism of the two Departments is broadly institutionalised as follows :

- 1) Co-ordination Committees at the State, district, block and village levels.
- 2) Joint visits by CDPOs and MOs.
- 3) Preparation and implementation of a detailed schedule for immunisation.
- 4) Utilisation of anganwadi as a focal point for delivery of health services.
- 5) Information sharing on health and nutritional status of women and children (including information on couples eligible for family planning).

It will also be noticed that the relationship between the ICDS and Department of Health and Family Welfare is partly of integration and partly of co-ordination as is clear from the following :

- 1. The integration begins from village survey which gives information on social, health and family planning indices.
- 2. Without integration, benefits will be less. For instance, immunisation without adequate nutrition (and vice-versa) will not ensure child survival.
- 3. Better child care requires small family, while conversely, small family norm will be acceptable only if children survive. Thus the two messages are interwoven.
- 4. Population education therefore, is an integral part of training at all three levels of ICDS (just as it is in the health hierarchy).
- 5. The information flows from Anganwadi Worker, both for social indicators (MPR) and health indicators (MMR).
- 6. Anganwadi Worker maintains growth chart and health card which is the job responsibility of health functionaries.
- 7. Anganwadi Worker maintains birth and death statistics, while the Consultants (from Medical Colleges and Hospitals) help in the development of a sound recording system.
- 8. Orientation of AWW is done at block level by MO.

## **Co-ordination at the district level : Role of Collector/ DRDA**

It will be noticed that while at the Anganwadi and the Block level, there is a fair degree of co-ordination, there are problems at the higher level. The Collector/CEO DRDA can play an important role in providing institutional shape to co-operation between the various Departments for the implementation of ICDS programme alone. The following check-list will clarify the point:

### **What can the Collector do ?**

#### **Appointment of AWW**

- \* Ensure fair selection. Heads the committee himself in many districts;
- \* Ensure timely appointment;
- \* Send for training in time.

#### **Anganwadi Building**

- \* Find a suitable building from the community free or on rent
- \* Construct from Panchayat funds, NREP/RLEGP/Community donations

#### **Nutrition**

- \* Ensure uninterrupted supply of commodities
- \* At best price
- \* Proper transportation

#### **Health**

- \* Ensure co-ordination, meetings and attendance of all concerned
- \* Joint visits of CDPOs, MOs and BDOs
- \* Exchange of information
- \* Monitor and ensure vaccine and drug supplies
- \* Filling up of posts of medical and para medical staff

#### **Transportation**

- \* Ensure that these are used only for bonafide ICDS work.
- \* Not requisition them for non-ICDS duties.
- \* Sharing between MOs and CDPOs.
- \* Requisitioning for DWCD when required.



## **Department of Youth Affairs & Sports : An Inter-sectoral Model :**

Department of Youth Affairs & Sports can play a crucial coordinating role for development of women and children through three of its major organs namely, Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS), National Service Scheme (NSS) and Bharat Scouts & Guides (BS&G).

NYKS has been playing an important role in social mobilisation for literacy, immunisation, ORS, etc. Recently, it organised training programmes for ICDS workers in Uttar Pradesh besides a drive for the promotion of iodised salt and renovation of primary school buildings. Its UNICEF-assisted programme, "Youth Goal 2000: Health for All, Education for All" is a model of inter-departmental co-operation. Introduction of Health Awareness Units in 135 districts of the country is another innovative model of integrated health and population awareness.

NYKS has also taken a prominent part in the National Literacy Mission activities. Similarly it can play through the 2.5 lakh youth clubs, a crucial role in women and child development programmes in several ways, like in the location of WCD centres, identification of beneficiaries, selection of food preparations, identification of undesirable health practices, propagation of the correct practices, identification of income generating activities, introduction of smokeless chulhas, solar cookers, bio-gas plants, sanitary latrines, etc. It is pertinent to note that the district officer of this organisation is called Youth Coordinator whose unambiguous role is to coordinate with all the departments and programmes.

Role of NSS in literacy, immunisation, AIDS and drug abuse awareness, watershed development, etc. is another model of inter-departmental co-ordination. Gender justice is its regular agenda. Involvement of Bharat Scouts and Guides in the promotion of ORS at UNICEF's suggestion has been an interesting intervention recently at a negligible cost. All the three programmes are being fully mobilised for the forthcoming Pulse Polio Immunisation Campaign.

## **Inter-Ministry Co-ordination for Communication Support for Women and Child Development**

Development programmes cannot succeed without public acceptance and participation. The role of knowledge, attitudes and practices is most crucial in this area. Communication also has a critical role in creating demand for and utilisation of services. The success of programmes

relating to education, family welfare, health and nutrition, etc., depends largely on active involvement and participation of the community in general and women in particular. Studies have shown a poor communication support. A direct relationship between the lack of communication and socio-economic backwardness has also been established beyond doubt. The need to bridge this gap has been highlighted by virtually every plan. Each plan, seminar, conference or commission on women and children has talked about the need for communication and media support to programmes, but without noticeable impact.

### **Inter-Ministry Integrated Communication Strategies for Women and Child Development: The Core Group Report (1990)**

To explore the possibilities for Inter-ministry Co-ordination for Integrated Communication on Women and Child Development, a committee headed by the author was set up by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.

The objective of the study was to underline the fact that family planning is dependent on several other factors like literacy, infant mortality, health and income of women, pointing to the need for integrated communication programmes for women and child development, cutting across Departments/Ministries.

12 Departments/Ministries were studied. (MOHFW, Welfare, DWCD, Education, Culture, I & B, Agriculture, Food, Rural Development, Environment, Labour and Railways).

### **Main Findings**

- 1) There are as many as 16 Departments with programmes for Women and Child Development.
- 2) In the 12 Departments studied, there are 118 schemes/programmes for Women and Child Development.
- 3) There is a lot of overlapping among Departments on the subjects covered, and duplication of efforts in the production of software.
- 4) There has been no synchronisation among the channels of communication used.
- 5) Sharing/exchange of communication material among Departments does not exist.
- 6) Dissemination of materials is poor.
- 7) Workshops/conferences/seminars to promote Women and Child Development communication have been rare.



- 8) The co-ordination between user Departments, and I & B is grossly inadequate.
- 9) There is no Communication Policy to promote women and child development. (Only three departments have some guidelines).
- 10) All Departments are in favour of formulating communication policy for Women and Child Development, co-ordinating communication support activities, integrating communication resources, establishing a network for a two-way flow of information and establishing a computerised data base.
- 11) Most of the Departments favour establishing a Nodal Agency, visualising the following role :
- a) To act as a link between Departments, I & B, NGOs and private agencies.
  - b) To evolve a media policy and guidelines for all Departments.
  - c) To develop inter-ministerial communication strategies, identify priority areas, and prepare an Action Plan with specific tasks assigned to each participating Department.
  - d) To promote sharing of resources, equipments and materials.
  - e) To prepare an inventory of communication material available to avoid duplication and wastage.
- 12) Most departments preferred location of the Nodal Agency to be in DWCD, followed by I & B.

#### **Core Group Recommendations regarding coordination :**

- 1) A communication policy for integrated women and child development be formulated.
- 2) A Committee on Integrated Media Strategies should be set up including representatives of all the 16 Departments working for women and child development- at senior level (JS & above).
- 3) A functional level committee comprising Heads of Media Divisions of Departments/NGOs may be constituted for day-to-day co-operation.
- 4) A Resource Centre/Clearinghouse on communication for women and child development may be set-up for documentation and dissemination of information.



- 5) A Nodal Agency may be set up in one of the Departments (I&B, DWCD or MHFW).
- 6) An inventory of communication material available in each Department should be prepared and updated regularly.
- 7) Sharing of materials should be promoted. It will check duplication and prevent wastage of time and resources.
- 8) A workshop of media persons should be organised to assess the existing communication material for use/reuse, weed out the obsolete material and also to identify information gaps. New software should be produced only for the gaps identified.
- 9) All the journals and newsletters being brought out by the identified Departments should have some pages reserved for integrated messages.
- 10) A standard Reference/Resource Book on all women and child related issues should be brought out in all regional languages. This will be used by all media personnel as well as the field functionaries of the various departments.
- 11) A workshop of all the concerned 16 Departments and media experts may be called to discuss inter-departmental co-ordination based on this Core Group Report.

#### **Current Institutional Framework for Inter-departmental Coordination**

Current institutional framework for co-ordination includes the following :

1. **The Government of India (Transaction of Business) Rules 1961)** : Under these Rules, Government of India allocates to each Department/ Ministry the subjects on which each will have control. When the subject of a case concerns more than one department, all concerned departments have to be consulted. Every case in which a decision of one department is likely to affect the transaction of business allotted to another department comes under this category.

2. **Cabinet and the Standing Committee(s) of the Cabinet** : Important inter-departmental matters are brought before the Cabinet or its Standing Committee(s). However, no case which concerns more than one Department can be brought before a Standing Committee (or Ad hoc Committees) until all the Departments concerned have been consulted.

3. **Committee of Secretaries :** Inter-departmental matters are also resolved by a Committee of Secretaries headed by the Cabinet Secretary. Its role in inter-departmental co-ordination and cooperation is very significant. This Committee not only takes policy decisions on inter-departmental concerns, but also follows it up by monitoring the action taken. Monitoring Committee for Pulse Polio Campaign is one example. The Committee's role in crisis management is particularly significant.

4. **Consultative Committees of Parliament :** Each Ministry has a Parliamentary Consultative Committee, which reviews the work and performance of every department and autonomous bodies under the Ministry. One meeting during each session of Parliament and one Inter-session meeting are mandatory. This provides an opportunity for a holistic and integrated view of the activities of different wings/divisions of the Departments of the Ministry for which the Committee can be a good institution. However, in practice these committees tend to review one subject at a time. For instance, the Consultative Committee for HRD reviews each of the four Departments of the Ministry (Education, Culture, Women and Child Development & Youth Affairs and Sports) separately. Not only this, often within a department, a specific subject is taken up. For instance, if school education is the agenda of one meeting, literacy is that of another, the inter-dependence of the two subjects notwithstanding. Similarly, Youth Affairs and Sports are reviewed separately. With such a compartmentalised review within a Department, inter-departmental review is a tall order.

5. **Standing Committee of Parliament :** A recent addition to the institutional framework for an integrated and holistic inter-departmental review is the Standing Committee of Parliament. All departments, nearly 100, have been divided into 17 groups under many Committees. The Committees for DWCD are the Standing Committee of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and Ministry of HRD. Although, the basic idea is a greater parliamentary control over the executive, the potential of the Committee to bring about better integration and co-ordination of Departments/Ministries under it is enormous. It may be worthwhile for it to consider one of the following alternatives :

- a) Go in for only inter-departmental reviews;
- b) Keep an occasional session on inter-sectoral co-ordination alone.



6. **Inter-Ministerial/Inter-Departmental Committees** : Two or more Departments/Ministries sometimes set up a Co-ordination Committee on specific subjects. It has been observed that these Committees are essentially short-term, and do not have consistency either in approach or even in interest. Before long, these become ritualistic and fade out. An inter-departmental Committee on Family Planning Communication, set-up in 1987, that stopped functioning within two years is a case in point. A similar Committee was set up by National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO), but has failed to meet even once in three years! An Information Advisory Committee of the Ministry of Labour has similarly been still-born.

### **Constraints in Developing and Sustaining Inter-departmental Linkages**

Conceptually, there is no dearth of institutional framework for inter-sectoral co-operation and coordination. However, the reality is otherwise. There are several factors responsible for this :

- i) **Self-centred view** of the concepts of co-operation and co-ordination. Co-operation is how **others** cooperate with me and not how **I** can cooperate with the others. Why others must coordinate with me, and not why mutual co-ordination is essential.
- ii) The concept of '**empires**'. Every person in authority considers his charge as his fief, nay an empire, which he must jealously guard - from covetous eyes of the perceived usurpers.
- iii) **Tendency to sit tight over information**, under the notion that by giving information, you are giving away power. Ironically, most information related departments feel that information is their monopoly, their source of power, and must not be parted with.
- iv) **Token representation** : Since little importance is given to inter-departmental committees, often very junior persons, or those who are not dealing with the subject are sent to attend these meetings, just because they are the ones who could be spared. Further, even they go without any briefing. Of course, there is no de-briefing when the representative returns from the meeting. Very often, the note recorded by the worthy is : "Meeting attended". Or, if he is more generous and explicit : "Meeting attended. Nothing much of relevance to us was discussed. Let's await the minutes". You cannot be more matter-of-fact and to the point!



In addition, often the person "representing" the Department is different from the one who attended the previous meeting. Such a person is even more clueless and therefore is either a dumb spectator or contradicts his predecessor, making confusion worse confounded.

v) **Lack of institutional memory** : Often the decisions taken in a joint meeting are not converted into institutional memory. Minutes are generally recorded of course, but either these are too perfunctory, or are inaccurate. They are in any case often delayed for weeks, if not months. In the process they lose their importance and usefulness.

vi) **Everybody's baby is nobody's baby** : When several departments have to deal with the same subject, each tends to lose interest, leaving it to the others to look after it.

vii) **One-upmanship** : Often, a representative of a Department tries to upstage the others, sometimes on the basis of half-baked knowledge. Conversely, even a valid point made by one is taken as criticism by the other. This creates ill-will and bad blood, instead of harmony and co-operation.

## **The NGO Scenario**

If networking at the Government level is poor, it is virtually non-existent among the NGOs.

(a) In the first place, there are not enough NGOs, where they are required most - in the rural and tribal areas.

(b) Even where they exist, there is no co-ordination, linkage, or even information sharing. Often they are competitors and hostile to one another.

(c) For every one good NGO, there are nine dubious ones. These dubious NGOs are the worst enemies of the good NGOs, since by cornering a substantial chunk of funds, they deprive the genuine NGOs of the much needed finances.

d) Information about government programmes under which they can get funds is not available with them (since it is not widely disseminated by the Departments). The few NGOs who know about the schemes tend to corner the funds, often from several departments. Some get double or multiple funding while others starve. Information, as the saying goes, is power. In this case, **information is money**.

e) With all good intentions, often the people behind NGOs do not have financial and administrative experience which lands them into audit or vigilance problems. In such a scenario, fool-proof accounts and neat, laser-printed reports completely camouflage the real picture. A good case of volunteerism turning 'professional'.

## Recommendations

The following suggestions are offered :

1) A detailed study may be done to analyse the current situation, and identify the areas for synergy or co-ordination. Reporting and monitoring proformaes be evolved to make the linkages a reality.

2) Planning Commission should take the lead. Instead of operating sector-wise, it should devise ways to cut across sectoral compartmentalisation and prepare an institutional base not only in terms of common database but also in the form of monitoring mechanism, joint reviews, joint training, etc.

3) National Informatics Centre (NIC) can play a useful role. Its database should be available to all concerned Departments. A Local or Wide Areas Network (LAN/WAN) should be specifically devised for information sharing. It will also obviate double funding of NGOs.

4) Standing Committee of Parliament should occasionally hold a joint review of all the concerned departments within its purview. The Committee for Health and HRD already has within its ambit most of the major Departments concerning women and child development (namely Education, Youth Affairs & Sports, DWCD, Health, Family Welfare, etc.). Development of linkages and coordination may be one of its permanent agenda, since this will result in :

- (a) Cost savings on account of reduced duplicate effort, and
- (b) Optimum return from the limited budget, on account of synergy.

(5) Parliamentary Consultative Committee of the Ministry of HRD could also make co-ordination a regular agenda and hold joint review of programmes having a bearing on Women and Child Development.

6) Almost all the landmark documents on the child indicate the need for inter-departmental linkages : National Plan of Action for Children, U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child, National Nutrition Policy, National Plan of Action for Nutrition, Communication Strategy for Child Development, etc.. However, there is actually no follow up with the other Departments. Often the documents are not even sent to the other departments. A simple **department-wise checklist of action** should be prepared, followed up, and jointly reviewed and monitored.

7) An Inter-departmental Committee be constituted headed by Secretary, DWCD with representatives of other Departments of the level of Joint Secretary. It must meet once every quarter.

8) Each Department has its own numerous deliberative bodies/committees. The list of such committees should be exchanged, and all departments should identify areas of their concern and interest, so that they could be given representation on the concerned committees.

9) Co-ordination mechanism should be evolved at all levels: from planning and implementation down to the grassroots level of delivery.

10) **Panchayati Raj** offers an excellent opportunity. It should make micro-planning a reality, replacing the top-down approach. All the three levels of Panchayati Raj, viz., Zilla Parishad, Block Samiti and Gram Panchayat should be actively associated with all programmes, from planning and implementation, to monitoring and surveillance.

11) Other local institutions like **Mahila Mandals** and **Youth Clubs** should be strengthened and energised. They can play a crucial role in achieving synergy, and monitoring the performance of the local functionaries. Community mobilisation can be done by them most effectively. An aware community, conscious of its needs and rights, and having full knowledge of the existing programmes would be the best guarantee to ensure that the programmes meant for them, reach them.



12) To weed out the spurious NGOs, a self-cleansing mechanism should be evolved, in which an autonomous body of eminent social workers, jurists, etc. should carry out an Audit, Certification and Grading of NGOs according to their standing and performance. This will also obviate cumbersome (and corruption-prone) procedures of verification of these organisations by the government departments and agencies, and ensure autonomy.

13) In areas where there are no NGOs, efforts should be made to set up new NGOs by identifying motivated volunteers and bringing them together to form a society. They could be trained in the entire operation of setting up an NGO including its registration, project formulation, accounting, implementation, monitoring and report writing. An inventory of all programmes should be made available to them, so that they could match local needs with the existing programmes. This has been successfully tried recently by Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan in Uttar Pradesh where over a hundred NGOs were created and made operational, from among the ex-National Service Volunteers (NSVs).

14) And, finally, the **GO-NGO Network** initiative of DWCD should be given full support by all the concerned Departments. It should be strengthened and institutionalised. Inter-departmental linkages will also help GO-NGO Network, by maximising the reach of the networking system, against the present practice of various departments supporting only the easy-to-reach NGOs. It will also make it possible to address issues concerning children and women from a common platform and as a joint effort. The network's newsletter, should earmark one page or at least one column for each concerned Department ensuring that no department goes by default. The frequency should be increased to once a month as soon as possible. Since the ultimate impact must be felt at the grassroots level, every state and district should be encouraged to bring out its own local edition of the newsletter.

## Networking for Promotion of Child Health and Nutrition

\* Dr. Arun Gupta, MD (Ped.)

India is a large country having a child population (0-14 years) of more than 300 million and more than that if we stretch the definition of a child to under 18 years as put up by the Convention on Rights of the Child (CRC). We know that first few years of life are more important from the point of view of overall development of the child, as most of the brain development takes place during this period. When we consider promotion of child health and nutrition, we can realize how big this challenge is. Really the task is huge.

Let us have a brief look at what is required to be done. The health and nutrition goals and objectives of the National Plan of Action for Children, 1992 to be achieved by 2000 A.D. are -

### Child Health

**Goal :** Reducing IMR to below 60 by 2000 AD.

#### Objectives :

- \* Eradication of poliomyelitis.
- \* Elimination of neonatal tetanus.
- \* Lowering measles cases by 90 per cent and measles deaths by 95 per cent.
- \* 100 per cent immunization coverage of expectant mothers against with tetanus.
- \* Fifty per cent reduction in deaths due to diarrhoea in children under the age of five years and 25 per cent reduction in diarrhoea incidence rate.
- \* Reduction in mortality rates due to ARI by 40 per cent among the under-fives.

### Nutrition

**Goal :** Reduction of severe and moderate malnutrition by 50 per cent from 1990 levels among the under-fives.

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\* Chairman, Department of Pediatrics, Jaipur Golden Hospital,  
Rohini, Delhi.

&  
National Coordinator, BPNI, Delhi.

## Objectives :

- \* Reduction in the incidence of LBW babies.
- \* Reduction in iron deficiency anaemia in women.
- \* Control of iodine deficiency disorders (IDD).
- \* Control of vitamin A deficiency and its consequences including blindness.
- \* Empowering women for exclusive breast-feeding of children (4-6 months) and continued breast-feeding along with complementary foods well into the second year of life.
- \* Growth monitoring and promotion to be institutionalised by the end of 1990.
- \* Dissemination of knowledge and supporting services to increase food production and ensure household food security.

Let us examine the important indicators of child health and nutrition. Table 1 shows positive trends, but still the situation is not satisfactory.

**Table 1 : Some Vital Data on Child Health and Nutrition**

	Goals			Current Level
	1985	1990	2000	
IMR	106	87	60	73 (1993)
1-5 yr. mortality	20-24	15-20	10	*
LBW babies (<2500gms)	*	*	*	30% (1983)
Crude birth rate	25	18	10	29.2% (1992)
Growth rate	1.9	1.66	1.20	2.11 (1991)

The **Infant Mortality Rate (IMR)**, the most sensitive indicator of child's health is still very high. Even though it has reduced remarkably from over 200 in the beginning of the century to 73 in 1993. We need to achieve an IMR of less than 60 by 2000. Even if we reach this stage, the rate will still be 4-5 times higher compared to the rate in the developed countries. It is well known that when a country is able to bring down its IMR, the **crude birth rate** will come down automatically. Kerala is an excellent example to explain this trend (Table 2 & 3).



**Table 2 : Crude Birth Rate (CBR) 1981 - 1990**

	1981	1983	1985	1987	1990
India	33.9	33.7	32.9	32	30
Kerala	25.6	24.9	23.3	21.3	19.6

**Table 3 : Infant Mortality Rate (IMR)**

	1981	1983	1985	1987	1989	1990
India	110	105	97	95	91	80
Kerala	37	33	31	28	21	17

When we examine the 1991 Census data and the population projections, it seems that growth rate of more than 2 per cent is still very high in spite of decrease in fertility. To achieve these goals by 2000, it would require concerted efforts by all concerned.

#### **How these goals and objectives can be met ?**

Certain programmes and policies are made which are geared towards achieving these objectives. There are many such endeavours in our country including formulating the National Plan of Action for Children, National Nutrition Policy, National Health Policy, etc. Government plays a major role in these efforts though it cannot possibly undertake this gigantic task alone. There are a large number of NGOs to complement the government's efforts in this direction.

#### **Why have we not achieved the best ?**

Having known what happened in the past, I would try to analyse the situation as to why have we not been able to achieve the goals set for the health and nutrition of our children. Some of the important reasons are -

- \* Existing attitudes and practices prevalent in the society.
- \* Existing poor socio-economic conditions.
- \* Decline in the proportion of plan outlays for health care in each plan period.
- \* Inappropriate utilisation of funds.

It seems that women's education is the most important tool for improving child health, though maternal nutrition, birth spacing, social development in terms of health services and health education are also important.

### **What can be done ?**

1. Integration of health, nutrition and education services and community participation is vital for achieving the goals.
2. It is very important to have a good reliable, efficient networking system within the Government (inter-departmental) and between the Government and NGOs for implementing the programmes.
3. Having an NGO Cell is a welcome step.
4. We should have -
  - Inter-departmental linkages;
  - Clear objectives and concrete plans;
  - Accountability
  - Strict and constant monitoring and correct reporting;
  - Result based and 'not' performance based evaluations.
  - Clear indicators for evaluations.
  - NGO's Fund to be set up with simplified procedures for releasing grants.
  - Funds should be allocated for specific activities, e.g. training in lactation management, nutrition demonstration, monitoring of the Act, etc.

### **How NGO Cell can help ?**

- \* Involve concerned NGOs in child health and nutrition programmes at all levels.
- \* Identify NGOs specifically for a programme.
- \* Categorize NGOs by their major area of work at all levels of the Government set up and then assign specific roles to them.

- \* NGO Cell can regroup/restructure NGOs for better implementation of women and children programmes.
- \* There should be closer interaction and two - way communication between NGOs and the NGO Cell.
- \* NGOs should be committed and accountable.
- \* NGOs should have adequate resources and manpower.

#### **What should be avoided ?**

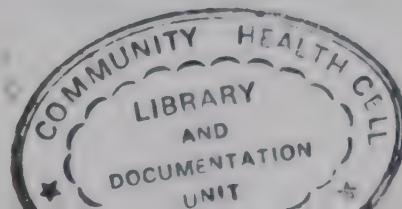
Both Government departments and NGOs should not have -

- \* Duplication of efforts
- \* Non-specific objectives
- \* Incorrect data recording to complete the report.
- \* Self styled programmes.
- \* Improper use of media
- \* Unclear objectives like reduction in the incidence of LBW babies without knowing the present number and improving breast-feeding rates without knowing the present status.

#### **Breast-feeding Promotion Network of India (BPNI)**

**BPNI**, a non profit registered voluntary organisation, was established on 3 December 1991 to stage an organised effort to protect, promote and support breast-feeding in India. It was set up on the recommendations of Supertrainers Workshop on Recent Advances in Human Lactation Management organised jointly by Indian Academy of Pediatrics (IAP), Federation of Obstetrical and Gynaecological Societies of India (FOGSI), and Association on Consumers Action on Safety and Health (ACASH, Bombay).

BPNI is a member of the **National Task Force on Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative** and provides technical inputs in the programme through its trainers. In 1995, BPNI was identified as the Regional Focal Point for Social Mobilization for South Asia by the **World Alliance for Breast-feeding Action (WABA)**. BPNI has been registered under Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 1976 under section 6(1) (FCRA No 231650680).





## Objectives

Broad objective of BPNI is to protect, promote and support breast-feeding in India and empower women to breast-feed their infants exclusively for first 4-6 months of life, and to continue breast-feeding with appropriate complementary foods, well into the second year of life.

## Specific Objectives

- i) To train health personnel in human lactation management.
- ii) To produce information, education and communication (IEC) material for parents and others.
- iii) To publish BPNI Bulletin regularly (3 times in a year)
- iv) To update the knowledge of health personnel and members.
- v) To conduct research in the field of breast-feeding.

## Training

**Human Lactation Management Training (HLMT)** for health workers is given top priority. Unlike the usual classroom training, this is a unique kind of training with special emphasis on participatory approach for skill transfer with the help of role play, group work, informal discussions, field visits to mothers and babies, etc. Interactive relationship between the trainer and trainees is an important part of these sessions. The duration of the different sessions is -

\* Human Lactation Management Training (HLMT) Course - 3 to 4 days.

\* HLMT Sensitization Workshop - one day.

\* Workshop on Monitoring and Implementation of Infant Milk Substitutes, Feeding Bottles and Infant Foods (Regulation of Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 1992 - 1 to 2 days.

\* Other innovative programmes such as inservice training for doctors, nurses, etc. in human lactation management.

So far BPNI has conducted five courses of HLMT; and innumerable one day sensitization meetings/workshops for health workers. In all the cities, inservice courses for doctors, nurses, etc. are being organised as a regular feature. In addition, national and state level workshops related to Infant Milk Substitutes, Feeding Bottles, Infant Foods Act, 1992 were also organised. Around 200 health personnel who are members of BPNI and many non-BPNI members have also been trained 95 key trainers.

BPNI has developed a standard set of **training material** for HLMT. HLMT Module consists of a complete set of instruction manual, slides and transparencies. About 50 trainers also have material for training in monitoring.

### **Monitoring of Infant Milk Substitutes (Regulation Production Supply and Distribution) Act, 1992.**

BPNI has been in the forefront for the strict monitoring of the activities of breast milk substitute producers for identifying the violators of the Infant Milk Substitutes, Feeding Bottles, Infant Foods (Regulation of Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 1992. BPNI has also been initiating suitable action, including legal action to thwart attempts to violate this Act. BPNI members' vigilance and protests have yielded results. Hindustan Foods, Goa responded in a positive manner to our suggestions on the violation of the Act.

### **Criminal complaint against Nestle :**

In early 1995, ACASH an institutional member of BPNI, filed through National Coordinator, BPNI, a criminal complaint against Nestle India Ltd. for violation of the Infant Milk Substitutes, Feeding Bottles and Infant Foods (Regulation of Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 1992. This complaint has been admitted for hearing. The Hon'ble Magistrate has taken cognizance of the criminal complaint and the case is still in the court.

### **Membership**

Membership of BPNI is open to all individuals and organisations who believe in or are engaged in promotion of breast-feeding. Doctors, specially pediatricians and

obstetricians, nurses, nutritionists, health-workers, breast-feeding counsellors, social workers, concerned citizens, mother support groups and consumer protection organisations constitute the bulk of BPNI membership today, which is 700 till date.

The membership is spread in over 150 cities of India. BPNI has representation in 20 States and Union Territories. They are all volunteers. From this volunteer force, BPNI has nominated 20 State Coordinators and 100 City Coordinators all over India to organise breast-feeding promotion related work.

### **System of Networking**

We have evolved a system to enrol members who are interested in promotion of breast-feeding and nominate active persons from each State as State Coordinators. To start with, we had Zonal Coordinators and now we have City Coordinators in 150 cities who coordinate the activities of breast-feeding promotion.

In our experience, HLMT is the single largest factor for capacity building and in creation of the BPNI Networking System, as those who have been trained have shown much greater results and are better equipped to carry on the task of promotion of breast-feeding in their respective areas. These trained persons play a double role. On one hand they play the role of key trainer and on the other a counsellor, to help mothers in successful breast-feeding. HLMT is needed on a very large scale in our country as our medical education lacks necessary input for learning skills of lactation management.

### **Problems**

The major problems faced are -

- (i) Lack of uniform structure in each State.
- (ii) Non-availability of committed persons at right places.
- (iii) Lack of funds.



iv) Breast-feeding is divided under different administrative sections nutrition and health. The biggest blow to our training programme came in the first year when nobody came for it due to the administrative set-up. Still a concrete plan on lactation training is lacking.

v) Another area which needs attention is the complicated procedures of law - for going to court against violators of the Act. Government perhaps did a favour by putting some NGOs under section 21-1-c of the Act, but without legal aid and the resources it is quite a useless effort.

vi) Funds to run an office of NGO is the biggest problem when the main activity of NGO is not on the priority list of the Government or Donors.

vii) There should be an apex breast-feeding committee. This committee should develop indicators of breast-feeding monitoring and research into qualitative aspects of breast-feeding promotion. Breast-feeding promotion should be declared as a comprehensive programme.

viii) There is an urgent need for a clear-cut statement on breast-feeding as it has been recognised as the single most feasible and cost-effective intervention for bringing down the IMR and improving child survival.

## **Future Strategy**

A system of District/State level networking and coordination with district health and nutrition team should be developed, keeping in view training in lactation management. At the central level networking with Government and UNICEF should be strengthened.

## **Publications**

Publication of material for Information, Education and Communication (IEC) has been a regular feature of BPNI's activities. The various publications include BPNI Bulletin; Breast-feeding and Infant Feeding - A Guide for Parents; Booklet on Exclusive Breast-feeding for the Baby You Love; Video Cassettes on Breast-feeding and Infant Feeding (Under Production); Brochure on Human Lactation Management Training (HLMT); and Shishu Aahar Kuchh Jaankaari (Hindi).

**Intensive Sanitation Project Medinipore :  
A Harbinger of Social Health and Social Change**

\* Prof. S. Chakravorty

**Introduction**

Environmental Sanitation did not hold any significant importance in the national scenario till '70s. Actually planners and development leaders in the country started giving importance on stock taking since '80s which was Water and Sanitation Decade. Several attempts were made to achieve the target of providing 25% rural families with sanitary latrines during the decade 1981-90. Against this target, the achievement till March 1992 was a meagre 3%. Since 1980, intensive coverage in terms of installation of sanitary latrines got priority, but it was mostly subsidy oriented. Secondly, the programmes were basically conceived more as a hardware support rather than integrated approach to enhance mass awareness and motivation towards environmental sanitation. It has resulted in the non-use of 80% of the low cost sanitary latrines provided through subsidy based programme. As subsidy was the main consideration, intensive coverage with sanitation facilities became impossible mainly due to inadequate allocation of funds for the installation of sanitary latrines and low awareness among the rural masses regarding environmental sanitation.

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**Basic Information of Medinipore District (1991 Census)**

Total Population	:	83,31,912
		Rural: 75,10,917
		Urban: 8,20,995
Area	:	14,081 sq. kms.
No. of Sub-division	:	7
No. of C.D. Blocks	:	54
No. of families	:	14,52,040
Literacy rate	:	80%
Access to family toilets	:	1,48,440 (10.22%)
		Rural : 61,495 (4.74%)
		Urban : 86,945 (56.41%)

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It is true that to provide subsidy to all the rural families in the country is really a dream, as the rate of subsidy is very high and availability of funds for the same is really beyond our means. Moreover, there is no technical option other than two pit latrines.

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\* Director, Ramakrishna Mission Lokasiksha Parishad,  
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Considering the vastness of the problem, planners are naturally concerned about developing an alternative approach and models for promotion of Sanitation Programme. A number of alternative approaches have been experimented with in different parts of the country.

One of the alternative models, Intensive Sanitation Project (ISP) has started in Medinipore by involving Ramakrishna Mission Lokasiksha Parishad (RKMLP) Narendrapur with support from UNICEF and Government of West Bengal.

The main focus of the Intensive Sanitation Project is on self-financed sanitation development programme through social mobilization.

### **Objectives**

- i. To reduce IMR and water borne diseases by providing improved sanitation education and low cost sanitation facilities at household and institutional levels.
- ii. To make the people aware of personal hygiene, food, sanitation, safe water, excreta disposal, solid and liquid waste disposal, disease transmission and relationship of safe water and sanitation with health.
- iii. To create a better and safe environment for better living through a package of total sanitation measures.
- iv. To introduce low cost appropriate technology, making it affordable and acceptable to different categories of people in the rural areas.
- v. To develop and test a methodology and operational strategy so as to make the sanitation programme self-sustaining and self-expanding.
- vi. To involve the community, specially the local youth clubs/women's groups in planning and implementation of the sanitation programme at the grassroots level.
- vii. To establish intersectoral linkages to help and promote immunisation, ORT, nutrition education and income generation activities among women.

### **Salient Features of Intensive Sanitation Project**

- \* Emphasis is on promotion of sanitation education covering at least 80% population of the district.
- \* Programme is being implemented through about 20-30 village level voluntary organisations in each community development block.

- \* Village level voluntary organisations plan and implement the project at the grassroots level.
- \* Involvement of village voluntary organisations reduces the project implementation cost.
- \* For 3-4 blocks, a cluster organisation (Federation of Village Level Organisations) takes up supervisory responsibility.
- \* Each village level organisation works with 1,500 families.
- \* For every 250 families, there is one motivator (village volunteer)
- \* Low cost models of latrines and other sanitation facilities have been developed to make it affordable and acceptable even for economically backward families.
- \* Production centre is established for two blocks to produce various components of low cost sanitary facilities.
- \* Materials are collected and stored in the village level organisation for easy availability.
- \* Beneficiaries deposit money at village organisation for sanitation facilities.
- \* Village organisations install sanitation facilities through their trained mason.
- \* Sanitation motivation camps, home visits, group meetings, street meetings, video and slide shows, sanitation song programmes, sensitisation of opinion leaders, rallies, etc are organised by village voluntary organisations with the help of cluster organisations.
- \* Families above the poverty line are paying the entire cost for sanitation facilities and families below the poverty line get Rs. 200.00 as subsidy for installing household latrine.
- \* Incentive to motivators and village organisations are being given against their physical achievements.
- \* Production centres create employment opportunities for local people.
- \* Village women folk are involved in repairing and maintaining tubewells.
- \* Beneficiary families contribute monthly for maintenance of water sources.

\* District administration and panchayat institutions are the partners in advocacy and installation.

\* West Bengal Government constituted two monitoring committees at State and district levels.

\* The Project reviews and monitors the activities every month on a fixed date at district and village levels respectively.

### The Project with Innovative Ideas

Intensive Sanitation Project (ISP) being implemented in the district of Medinipore had started functioning in March 1990 though the preparatory work was initiated in October 1989. Based on experiences of the country's sanitation activities till mid 1980s, ISP was formulated to -

- make people aware about environmental sanitation and create a demand for sanitation facilities on the whole;

- make necessary arrangements for getting sanitation facilities available at the door steps of the rural people; and

- adopt various programmes/activities to motivate people continuously to accept/utilise sanitation facilities.

### Implementing Agency

The Ramakrishna Mission Lokashisha Parishad has been selected as the implementing agency jointly by the State Government and UNICEF. The project is being implemented through a network of clusters (consortium of youth clubs/Mahila Mandals) and clubs in the district.

Access to Toilets in Medinipore and Neighbouring Districts (1991 Census)

District	Rural			Urban			Total		
	Household	Access to Toilets		Household	Access to Toilets		Household	Access to Toilets	
		Number	Percentage		Number	Percentage		Number	Percentage
Medinipore	12,98,540	61,495	4.74	153,590	86,945	56.61	14,52,040	148,440	10.22
Howrah	317,045	43,125	13.60	363,040	282,810	77.90	6,80,085	325,935	47.93
Hooghly	531,655	113,455	21.34	266,525	220,870	82.97	7,98,180	334,325	41.89
24-Parganas (South)	854,770	117,140	13.70	152,935	108,380	70.87	1,007,705	225,520	22.38
Bankura	458,545	18,045	3.94	42,105	20,080	47.69	500,650	38,125	7.62
West Bengal	8,903,125	1,095,860	12.31	3,617,220	2,848,690	78.75	12,520,345	3,944,550	31.51



RKMLP is involved in the Integrated Rural Development Programme through youth clubs and mahila mandals in West Bengal since 1955 and is implementing various programmes particularly on child care, community health, non-formal and adult education, income generation programme, training on software and hardware component in 11 districts including Midnapore.

RKMLP is directly involved in the implementation of Environmental Sanitation Programme since 1980 and it has been identified by UNICEF, CAPART and Government of India for imparting training to various categories of functionaries of sanitation projects supported by the Government of India, through CAPART, UNICEF and State Government. RKMLP is also experienced in running self-financed sanitation development programmes in West Bengal.

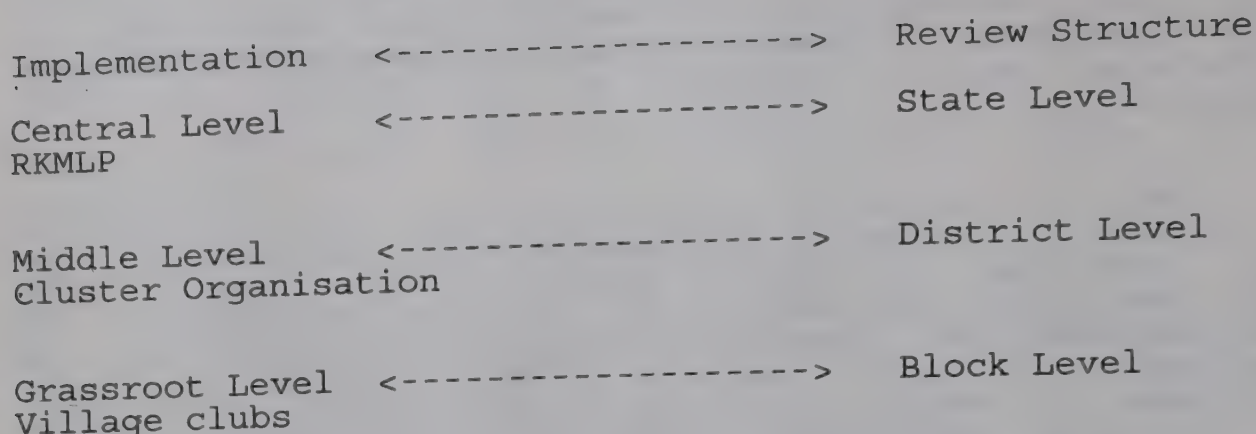
### **Infrastructure for Implementation**

A 3-tier implementation structure has been set up to achieve the Project objectives and goals. In this structure, RKMLP is at the central level, cluster organisations are at the middle level and village organisations are at the grassroots level. Similarly, a 3-tier Review Committee has been formed by the Government at the State, district and block levels involving development departments, panchayats, RKMLP and UNICEF. The Review Committees help and guide the project to formulate strategies for smooth implementation.

The cluster organisations plan, implement and monitor all the activities including advocacy, training, production and procurement and installation of sanitation units. The cluster organisations chalk-out the activities under the direct guidance and professional support of RKMLP and in consultation with the associated clubs for their commanding areas. The implementation strategies are formed in the light of suggestions made by the clusters in monthly review meetings with the project leaders.

Initially, one cluster organisation in one block strategy was formulated, but during the process of implementation it has been changed to one cluster organisation for 3-4 blocks along with an ISP Implementation Committee in each block. The Block Level ISP Implementation Committee plans and monitors all the activities of the Project. The implementation infrastructure developed till September 1995 is as given below -

-----  
**Fig.1 Implementation Structure**



**Infrastructure Developed (till Sept'95)**

Cluster organisations working : 15  
Youth clubs involved : 1105  
Production centres established : 22  
C.D. Blocks touched : 54  
Villages under operation : 4112

**Team Work Makes Things Easy**

To make sanitation "a priority" and to achieve 100% coverage under sanitation and safe water in Medinipore, joint efforts have been started. The joint efforts of voluntary organisations, panchayat institutions and Government administration have yielded results.

**RKMLP** co-ordinates with Government, UNICEF, district administration and panchayats for smooth implementation of the project. It motivates and organises the cluster and village organisations to take part in implementation. It formulates implementation strategies, plan of action and extends professional support to all concerned.

**Cluster organisations** plan, implement and monitor advocacy programmes; help in organising training, procurement, production and supply of the components of sanitation facilities; maintain contact with block level administration and panchayats; and organise the village clubs.

**Village organisations** are directly involved in advocacy and motivational activities; take up the responsibility of providing sanitation facilities with the help of trained masons; and monitor sanitation activities.

**District, block, and village panchayat institutions** provide invaluable support in implementation of the project.

### **Human Resource Development**

Success of movement oriented activities is dependent on trained persons. The project has developed a band of trained workers to put the self-financed sanitation idea into action. Both, software and hardware training is organised considering the need of the programme. The ISP Medinipore has developed different need based Training Modules on Sanitation. **Table 1** and **Table 2** give the list of training courses organised.

**Table 1 : Software Training Organised\***

Course	No.	Participants
Village Sanitation Motivators	122	4119
Orientation on Sanitation for Youth Club Leaders	88	2330
Trg. on ISP Accounts	16	432
Orientation on Sanitation for Panchayat Members	140	9194
Training on Sanitation Songs	03	55
Orientation for Water Committee	33	925
Training for Task Force	01	31
Training for ORS Depot Holders	46	1796
Training for Project Personnel	05	211

\* Till September 1995



**Table 2 : Hardware Training Organised\***

Course	No.	Participants
Seed Mason Training	04	56
Village Mason Training	52	1095
Women Tara Hand Pump Care-taker Training	35	669
Training on Hand Pump Drilling	03	41
Training on Smokeless Chullah Construction	38	819

### **Spreading the Sanitation Messages**

The major programme of ISP is to communicate **sanitation messages** to the people. The goal of sanitation advocacy activities is to motivate the people to accept sanitation facilities on self-financed basis. In sanitation advocacy strategy more emphasis is given on personal contacts and group mobilization. To put the strategy into action ISP identified Village Sanitation Motivators for a group of families in the ratio 1:250. The motivators are working with the village clubs. The various communication activities organised are given below in **Table 3**.

**Table 3 : Communication Activities for Spreading Messages**

Name of the Activity	Number	Number of Participants (Sept. 1995)
Motivation Camps	2105	1263000
Video & Slide Shows	1325	795000
Wall Writings	7056	1411200
Sanitation Songs Programmes	1245	244000
Exhibitions	313	1565000
Home Visits	343025	1715125
Group Meetings	3829	128535

The **advocacy material** produced is -

- \* Flash Cards on ISP
- \* Pictorial Calender on ISP Concept
- \* Folder on ISP
- \* Leaflets

a) About the Project

b) Special Features of Low Cost Latrines

- \* Question Answer Book for Volunteers
- \* Technical Drawing Book
- \* Audio Cassettes on Sanitation Songs
- \* Video Film

a) Documentary on ISP

b) Feature Film on Sanitation

\* Video Spots on : Safe water, Sanitation, Hand Washing, ORS, Food Hygiene, Open Defecation, Prescription for Health.

### **Supply of Sanitation Services**

ISP has developed a supply and service system in involving cluster organisations and village clubs. The **Youth Clubs** are working as service centres and supplying technological support and materials to the beneficiaries on demand at door step. The low cost technical know-how of different sanitation facilities and latrine models is available with all the clubs.

Each Youth Club has got at least one trained mason, 2-3 trained motivators and smokeless chullah construction workers. The beneficiaries are depositing the cost of materials at the club and clubs are arranging the construction. The clubs are supervising and monitoring the installation and extending follow-up services for proper use and maintenance of sanitation units.

The efforts of sanitation education and easy availability of low cost facilities rendered by the clubs/panchayats has helped in increasing the rate of installation. In the initial stages, self-financed approach was not spontaneously accepted by the people. But gradually, the rural masses understood the need for sanitation and began to accept the ideas of ISP and facilities (**Table 4**).

Table 4 : Installation of Sanitation Facilities (Sept.'95)								
Year	HHLCL	SC	SP	GP	BP	THP	BLHHLCL	Total
1990	295	25	14	15	12	18		379
1991	3947	1063	47	360	60	62		5539
1992	14463	1737	50	100	54	101		16505
1993	18583	1788	56	950	84	129		21590
1994	23429	1508	43	1147	72	51		26265
1995 (Sept.)	26017	694	74	576	148	31	52	27555
Total	86751	6815	248	3148	430	392	52	97818

HHLCL - House Hold Low Cost  
Latrine

BP - Bathing Platform  
GP - Garbage Pit

SP-Soakage Pit

SC- Smokeless Chullah  
THP- Tara Direct Action  
Handpump

BLHHLCL- Biogas Linked HHLCL

### Changing the Attitude and Habits

The ISP has developed 12 different models of low cost latrines ranging from Rs. 270/- to Rs. 3200/-, considering the economic affordability of common people and self-financing approach of the Project. It is also notable that 75.27% beneficiary families have accepted direct one pit latrines, out of which 61.67% are of non-lining pit latrines. It means that the Project has been able to motivate the middle and lower income group families to install latrines. Secondly, beneficiaries are also mostly interested in the low cost models considering their economic affordability. The idea of changing attitude from "open air defecation" to "low cost latrine" has been activated.

### National Record

- \* All families of 3 Gram Panchayat areas installed latrines.
- \* All families of 115 villages in Medinipore have access to household latrines.



## Income Generation Aspect of the Project

When the Project was prepared, it was not considered that it will contribute a lot even in the field of income generation activities. So far (August 1993) the Project has created directly 3,36,728 **man days of employment** at Rs. 40/- per day for production of various components and installation of latrines in Midnapore. A sum of Rs. 1,34,69,129.00 has been paid as direct **wages and incentives** for construction of 60,717 latrines and 5,652 units of other sanitation facilities. If indirect wages like loading, unloading, carrying, etc. are included, then the number of mandays and amount of wages will be much higher. This may also be considered as one of the achievements of the Project. The wages paid under the Project are as given in **Table 5**. The wage component is 19.53% of the total turnover of Rs. 26,30,52,089.37 of the Project.

**Table 5 :Wages Paid under the Project (March'90-December'94)**

Sl. No.	Description of Work	Total Wages (in Rs.)
01.	Construction of Mosaic Pan & Traps	10,92,906.00
02.	Construction of Pre-fabricated Components of Latrines	13,85,658.00
03.	Installation of Latrines	66,91,910.00
04.	Installation of Other Sanitation Facilities	2,67,140.00
05.	Direct Wages for Carrying	21,64,080.00
06.	Incentive for Motivators	
i)	Construction of Latrines	18,21,510.00
ii)	Construction of Other Sanitation Facilities	45,925.00
		18,67,435.00
		1,34,69,129.00
	Wage Component	1,16,01,694.00
	Incentive	18,67,435.00
		1,34,69,129.00

## Linking Water Programme with Sanitation Programme

The Project has linked the water programme with the sanitation programme. When 40-50 families in a community install latrines then one Tara Direct Action Handpump is installed for these families to get safe water. In the process of linking the water programme with sanitation, the Project has been able to introduce **community based maintenance system** for all the pumps.

A seven (7) member **Water Committee** including four (4) women members has been formed for each pump for its maintenance. The beneficiary families are contributing Rs. 500.00 as initial deposit and pay @ Rs. 0.50 per month per family towards Tara Pump Maintenance Chest Fund. About two or three women caretakers selected by the villagers and trained under the Project are very efficiently doing the repairing and maintenance job. A movement towards "**Our Pump, our Problem, our Solution**" has been created. Seeing the small success of this movement, a number of panchayats are also coming forward and involving themselves in the process. Till December 1994, a sum of Rs. 2,54,885.60 has been contributed by the beneficiaries towards the Maintenance Chest Fund for 361 hand pumps.

### Impact

\* The project has been able to cover all the families with low cost latrines in 3 Gram Panchayat areas. From these examples, other 61 Gram Panchayat authorities came forward to access low cost latrine in all houses in their areas.

\* There has been a visible multiplier effect so far as the people's acceptance of the Project is concerned. A number of new village clubs in the Project district are coming forward to implement the Sanitation Project in their own areas.

\* The common people including those from low income groups and backward communities are coming forward to install the facilities.

\* Women's groups are getting involved in motivating the menfolk to accept the facilities. This has enhanced the pace of growth of the movement.

\* Village Level Panchayats are getting involved in the total process and advocating the idea regularly.

\* The District Administration and Panchayats are extending full help and cooperation in implementing the Project at all levels.



- \* The blocks and villages not yet covered under the Project are contacting to extend the facilities to their areas.
- \* Seeing the examples of sanitation villages, people of neighbouring villages are coming forward to accept the idea of self-financed environmental sanitation activities in their villages. Villagers of sanitation village feel proud of their environmentally clean, tidy and healthy village.
- \* The Project has been able to create a sense of self-respect amongst the women folk by giving importance to the housewives in decision making process for installation of household low cost latrines, smokeless chullahs, etc.
- \* The Project has been able to create confidence amongst the village women folk by giving them the entire responsibility of repairs and maintenance of hand pumps.
- \* The State Government has accepted the Medinipore model for all the districts of West Bengal. For wider coverage, the Government has reduced the subsidy for beneficiaries under the centrally sponsored scheme of Central Rural Sanitation Programme from Rs. 2,000/- to Rs. 200/- for target families.
- \* A number of State Governments have introduced self-financed sanitary projects in their areas and substantially reduced the quantum of subsidy. Many of them have also started involving village organisations in implementation of this programme.
- \* The impact on employment has been very significant due to the introduction of Intensive Sanitation Project in the district of Medinipore. It has been possible to create direct employment by generating 3,36,728 man-days of work so far. The total wage payment till Dec. 1994 has been Rs. 1,34,69,129.00. If we take into account the indirect employment generation consequent upon the use of various building materials, supply of materials at the work site etc. the total number of man-days created will be enormous.
- \* In villages where more than 80% households have adopted the low cost latrines and other facilities, impact on health has been very significant.
- \* Social tension and conflict in many villages has come down because of social mobilisation through introduction of low cost latrines.
- \* A new partnership has grown between panchayats and voluntary organisations through the Intensive Sanitation Project.



## Constraints

The following problems have been encountered by the Project since inception :

- \* At the initial stage, the advocacy and installation activities had been disrupted due to heavy rains and frequent floods in the project area which has ultimately retarded the desired rate of growth.
- \* At the initial stage, common people were not prepared to accept the self-financing approach because almost all the Government and non-government development programmes are highly subsidy oriented. A long time was taken to establish this new idea. Even a number of village clubs were not accepting the new concept but through regular interaction at all levels, the problem has been minimised.
- \* In the Project area, CAPART's Subsidised Sanitation Programmes are creating misunderstanding and hindering the growth of the movement.
- \* Poor road communication in the villages is one of the major hindrances in achieving the physical targets of the Project.
- \* Sometimes crisis of raw materials has also slowed down the pace of installation of the facilities.
- \* Originally it was thought that the educated and economically better off people would accept the idea of self-financing quickly and the programmes were chalked out accordingly. But the assumption was not correct. This initial strategy has also been a hindrance to the movement.
- \* Initially, loan facilities were provided at a higher rate and the regular income group people were given priority considering their affordability of repayment. But this assumption proved to be wrong. This gave teething problems at the initial stage of the Project.

## Our Conviction

Thus, Intensive Sanitation Project should be viewed not merely as a sanitation programme but it should be looked upon as a multi-dimensional programme having a bearing on various social facets of life. But to achieve this objective, the programme should be initiated as a movement involving maximum number of people of the given area. We are convinced that if such a movement-oriented programme is taken up, the country will be able to achieve significant progress in the field of sanitation by the end of this century.

# CONSTRAINTS IN IMPLEMENTING GOVERNMENT PROGRAMMES

\* Dr. Samir Chaudhuri

This paper is based on the author's experience of working in an NGO, i.e CINI (Child In Need Institute), and being closely associated with the NGO movement in India since 1974. The paper is limited to the experience of implementing various government programmes by a relatively large number of NGOs based in West Bengal. While many NGOs are content to implement their own programmes which they have designed and have been resourceful enough to raise their own funds, a majority of small or large NGOs always nurture a desire to be able to implement government programmes. Some of the reasons may be as follows :

1. Gain credibility with the Government, other NGOs, bilateral or multilateral donors.
2. Open up further opportunities to receive more projects to serve the needy, fulfilling the NGOs objectives and also to assure continuity of service to its employees.
3. Sometimes to acquire assets, such as a building, vehicles, equipment, etc.

The topic under discussion is dealt under Inherent Problems of Government Programmes/Schemes, and Constraints Faced during Implementation.

## Inherent Problems of Government Programmes/Schemes

Only in the last few years government officials have started consultation process when they wish to float a new scheme. But such efforts are few and far between. Most of the established government programmes were designed by officials without any consultation, either with the beneficiaries or with NGO representatives. So they suffer from many inherent design flaws. Some of them are detailed below :

1. Lack of information related to availability of programmes : Very few government departments have a "user friendly" system of information dissemination or documentation related to the number of programmes available, who are eligible to apply and how to apply for them.

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Calcutta, West Bengal



2. No scope for pre-project orientation - a component of awareness creation along with the budget is often not built-in the programme to inform the community about the project objectives as well their own responsibilities. This results in obvious problems during the implementation phase of the project.

3. No scope for continuation of project in any form : Budget provisions come to an end abruptly and the project activities have a similar end. A method of integrating the phasing out of the project into another government programme or scheme usually does not exist.

4. Lack of administrative and financial flexibility : Directives for administering the project should be clear cut for obvious reasons. However, when poor salary grades are fixed for academically qualified staff, it becomes difficult to find candidates for the posts. Further, instructions for utilisation of the budget have to be strictly adhered to and, there is no flexibility to transfer funds from one head to the other.

5. Insufficient overhead/administrative costs : Small NGOs find it very restrictive and difficult to manage within the small amounts permitted under these heads.

6. Securing "no objection"/clearance from different quarters.

This system has its advantages, such as the promise of receiving support during the critical periods of the project. Under SCOVA schemes approved by the State Health Department sanction from people's representatives, CMOH, etc. often lead to inordinate delay. A similar picture is observed in the Rolling Fund Scheme of the Health Ministry.

### **Problems Faced during Implementation**

1. **Wrong selection of beneficiaries** : This is observed during the selection process of trainees, staff or beneficiaries of any government programme. When the selection process is guided by selfish reasons such as petty politics, monetary gain or communal alignments, wrong beneficiaries are chosen, trained and given benefits. It is commonly observed that there is lack of motivation among such candidates.



2. **Emphasis on qualification rather than experience :** As per the proposal approved, qualifications of personnel are to be strictly followed during their appointment. It is common knowledge that academically qualified personnel are not necessarily the best suited for the job compared to experienced and motivated personnel. In the Government scheme for street children, many NGOs are finding it difficult to appoint staff with MSW qualifications as street educators/supervisors.

3. **Problems related to fund release :** With very rare exceptions, almost all the government programmes suffer eternally from problems related to fund release. Most of AWTCs conducting ICDS training programme in West Bengal have a backlog of funds due to them for up to 2 to 3 courses. While there is no shortage of funds to pay salaries of ICDS functionaries, trainers at AWTCs remain without their salaries for months. The principal of the training centre has to avoid facing the supplier of rations and provisions, as the promised date of payment is long overdue. The lack of sensitivity of concerned officials to this eternal problem is beyond human comprehension.

Secondly, in many government programmes, one is expected to go to the concerned government officials on the night of 31st March with a signed statement and vouchers stating that the amount which is yet to be released, has been spent. Very few NGOs have capacity to incur expenditure from their own funds. This nightmarish experience of facing uncertainties and delays related to fund release, keeps away many small NGOs from implementing government programmes.

4. **Financial audit without "programme audit" :** Most government programmes are subjected to a strict financial audit. But unfortunately there is no discussion or study regarding the programme outputs and the qualitative aspects of the programme.

5. **Frequent transfers among government officials :** With frequent transfers, newly implemented programmes are improperly understood by the concerned officials. This leads to delays in decision making on critical problems which usually plague such programmes.

6. **NGO programme managers are not treated with respect :**  
It is often humiliating not to be treated with common courtesy by government officials. Very often true "partnership" is not observed between officials and NGO programme managers. This has a demoralising effect on the staff members of NGOs who are paid much less than their government counterparts and often do a far better job. It is very often stated by NGO programme managers that the government views them as cheap labour, as they can get away by paying less salaries.

### **Summary**

NGOs nurture a wish to implement government programmes or schemes as it makes them more creditable with government, other NGOs, and bilateral and multilateral agencies. NGOs face many problems while they implement such programmes. Some of the problems are attributable to the inherent flaws which creep into the programmes as they are designed without adequate consultation with the beneficiaries or NGO representatives who have to implement them. A "user friendly" system of disseminating information related to such programmes does not exist in the government departments. Many problems beset the NGOs who finally qualify to be granted the programmes, during the implementation phase, the most serious being the problem of timely fund release.

# Formulating Proposals for Financial Assistance for Projects Relating to Welfare and Development of Children and Women

Nagendra Nath\*

Projects and programmes are important components of development process which help in realising the socio-economic development of the country. The donors including government are concerned about the feasibility and viability of these projects. The performance of these projects is contingent upon better planning and administration.

The project formulation process contains precise project ideas and identifies the best possible manner of project implementation within the resources of the project management system as well as those of the environment. The project therefore could be defined as a plan or a scheme specifying certain objectives to be achieved within a certain time span. Project can also be perceived as a proposal for investment of capital for carrying out programmes and activities so as to provide good services to the target groups. A project could be termed quantifiable when benefits could be measured in terms of quantity or non-quantifiable when benefits cannot be measured in quantifiable monetary terms. Benefits which are measured in commonly accepted units and can be expressed in terms of money by known methods are termed as tangible benefits, while benefits which are not measurable through accepted methods or whose measurement is done by assumptions are termed as intangible benefits.

## Project Formulation

While preparing a project proposal the following broad guidelines may be considered :

1. Need for taking up the project.
  2. Objectives of the project.
  3. Project areas and beneficiaries.
  4. Organisational feasibility from the point of view of structure and capabilities.
  5. Project activities and resource requirement in terms of cash, kind and human.
  6. Cost estimate of the project.
  7. Sources of inputs.
  8. Techno-economic viability of the project.
  9. Financial viability of the project.
  10. Mechanism for supervision and monitoring the project.
  11. Cost effectiveness of the project.
  12. Pre-investment appraisal.
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\* Joint Director, NIPCCD, New Delhi.



## **Details of Project Formulation Process**

### **PART I**

#### **A Brief Write-up About the Voluntary Organisation**

i) Write-up about the sponsors/sponsoring voluntary agency : It should include year of establishment, aims and objectives, activities, achievements, financial situation, duration of working in the year, etc. Constitution, Annual Report and Audited Statement of previous year may be given as enclosures.

ii) Write-up on the area/location of the project : It should include some basic facts about the community and people living in the area, social infrastructure, local facilities/amenities available or lacking including communication and transport. Location map may be given as enclosure.

iii) Write-up on socio-economic situation/nature and extent of problem(s) faced by local community(s) along with its short term/long term implications.

iv) Hypothesis or Assumptions - what do we want to do or achieve and why ? Its short and long term implications.

### **PART II**

#### **Format for Submitting Project Proposal**

- 1) **Title of the project** : (A precise heading for the Project)
- 2) **Location** : (Village, Block, District, State)
- 3) **Time Frame** : (Period of Operation from start to finish)
- 4) **Objectives** : Short term; long term; (in terms of something concrete and measurable )
- 5) **Description of Programmes/Activities.**

For each programme or activity the following information should be provided :

- Target group or direct beneficiaries;
- Concrete project achievements likely to be attained by beneficiaries, if the project is successfully completed within the stipulated time frame;
- Indirect beneficiaries.

6) **Target Group/Beneficiaries**

7) **Resources to be Deployed or Needed**

Resources along with the number required in terms of land, accommodation, capital costs, equipment, logistics and supplies in various phases or stages of development may be mentioned.

8) **Personnel and Organisational Chart**

Please identify various categories of personnel needed i.e. field level specialists, supervisory, trainers, etc. along with their job description giving qualifications required and job chart and salary. It would be helpful to prepare an organisational flow chart of the project envisaged, indicating both activities and personnel needs. Specify monitoring feedback mechanism and supervisory roles.

9) **Coordination with Other Agencies and Programmes in the Area**

Indicate specific role of this project in relation to existing programmes or activities of other government or non-governmental agencies. Also specify whether it is a supplementary or a complementary effort. If it is supplementary, give justification for the same.

10) **Community Participation**

Component and quantum of community cooperation, participation and support to the project in monetary and non-monetary terms may be indicated.

Specify whether there is going to be a separate Advisory Committee/Implementation Committee for the project? If so, define its composition, role, etc. If not, indicate an existing body like Executive/Management Committee of the agency, local panchayat or any other existing body to be entrusted with the task of providing general guidance and direction to the project officials.

11) **Beneficiary Participation**

The extent and manner by which beneficiaries would or are expected to extend their support/cooperation/participation to the project.

12) **Continuity**

What is likely to happen when the project concludes what arrangements are envisaged for continuation of project activities on a more or less permanent basis?

13) **Financial Details (Budget Estimates)**

14) **Financial Control**

Audit and reporting procedure to be followed by the project sponsors.

15) **Method of Operation of this Project**

Please give detailed Plan of Operation including selection of site, guidelines for identification of beneficiaries, sequence of activities as per the work plan of the proposed project.



# Role of Media in Child Survival, Protection and Development

\* Dr. J S Yadava

Recognising children as a supremely important national asset, India adopted National Policy for Children in August 1974. It stipulates that children should find a prominent place in overall national development plans. Accordingly, a nation-wide programme Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) ensures the fulfilment of basic needs of children in the age group 0-6 years, and expectant and nursing mothers living in the most backward rural and tribal areas, and urban slums. ICDS provides a package of services comprising health check-up, immunisation, referral services, supplementary nutrition, pre-school education to children in the age group 3-6 years, and nutrition and health education to women. This integrated package of services is provided in a convergent manner for holistic development of children. At present, there are 3,066 ICDS projects benefitting 16.3 million children and 3.2 million mothers all over India.

More recently, India's ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, adoption of New Action Plan for Children are clear commitments to the **survival, protection and development of children**. In other words, the country can and will give highest priority to its children with a view to ensure that the worst elements of poverty, ill-health, malnutrition, illiteracy, exploitation and unhealthy environment will soon become conditions of the past. It is envisaged that India should enter the 21st century, having eliminated the worst forms of deprivation, giving its children the hope and start they need to shape their own future. The Central and State Governments, in partnership with thousands of non-government organisations are working to make this dream come true in the closing years of this century. Further, with the 73rd and 74th Constitutional amendments, village panchayats will be central to the various development programmes and activities at the grassroots level. Not only that, one-third of the members of the village panchayats would be women, thereby ushering in an era of empowerment of women.

Willing participation and mobilisation of the people are essential for adoption of new ideas and practices leading to better health and survival of children. For this, education and motivation through purposeful communication are essential. The contribution of communication to development processes, including child health and development is well accepted. We all work with

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\* Dr. J S Yadava, Director, Indian Institute of Mass Communication, New Delhi.

the faith to the extent of becoming somewhat fetish, that increased communication will lead to social change and development. This may not necessarily be true always.

For effective utilisation of scarce communication resources, a well thought out communication strategy needs to be worked out. For a meaningful communication strategy the first and foremost thing is to be clear about the following two aspects:

- 1) who constitutes the target audience, and
- 2) what do we want to achieve through any specific communication input.

We are all aware that in recent years there has been enormous development and expansion of **communication media**. We are also aware that expansion of mass media facilities have not benefitted or reached all sections of society uniformly. As a matter of fact, the reach and access to various **mass media** are limited by factors like literacy, purchasing power, location and contents. I would not go into these details here. However, I might say that despite limited reach and access, the mass media in certain situations has been very effective in education and mobilisation of the people even in remote rural and tribal areas, as well as in the case of other deprived sections of our society. It all depends upon the communication strategy and relevance of programme contents.

In the 1950s, we effectively utilised **radio** as a means of purposeful communication with rural people in the form known as "radio rural forum." Later on in the 1980s, deriving lessons from the radio rural forum experience, All India Radio, UNICEF and Government of India once again effectively utilised radio in the Mother-Child Care Programme under ICDS. The strategy/approach of appropriate radio programme production, group listening followed by discussion and feedback under the auspices of the Anganwadi workers in villages in different parts of the country proved effective. This was clearly revealed in the review of ten years experience in the year 1993. Radio was central to the strategy of media support to Mother-Child Care Programme. Its efficacy was further enhanced wherever it was supplemented with relevant printed publicity material and folk media.



Keeping in view the overall objective of information, education and motivation of target audience, so as to mobilise them in support of specific action which would ensure child survival, protection and development of children, the specific communication tasks and inputs should be identified. Thereafter, well thought out, systematic and serialised communication programme inputs need to be produced. This, together with organised listening/viewing, feedback, etc. need to be supplemented with other printed publicity material as well as folk forms of communication. All these media efforts need to be supported by adequate interpersonal communication for final motivation and adoption of new ideas and practices as envisaged under National Policy for Children (1974) and the National Plan of Action for Children (1992).

Similarly, radio can also be a very effective means of reaching women members of the village panchayats for information, education, motivation and empowerment. In the coming years, village panchayats are going to play a crucial role in implementation of various development programmes at the grass roots level.

**Television** is more powerful and effective as a medium. Its penetration in rural and remote areas of the country is also fast picking up. There is a need for timely attention to have appropriate programmes/software for education and motivation of the target audience in support of child survival, protection and development. If development programmes are made interesting enough, people are likely to view them, as these are likely to meet their information and education needs.

Another important role which mass media like radio and television can play in support of child survival, protection and development programmes is in serving as educator, and as a link between policy planners, service providers and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) at the grassroots level.

There is a need for studying and clearly understanding and identifying the information and education needs of the functionaries involved in implementation of various programmes and activities in support of child survival, protection and development. Specific media support programmes to upgrade the knowledge and skills of these functionaries may be launched which will not only increase their efficiency, but will also make their role more acceptable and valuable in the eyes of the public.



To conclude, it may be stated that as revealed by many development communication projects, both in India and other developing countries, the mass media, radio and television, normally are effective in creating awareness on a wide range of issues and providing greater acceptability of new ideas and practices. Mass media becomes even more effective, if communication efforts through mass media are supplemented by other forms of communication as well. In many situations, **traditional forms of communication** are very effective. More importantly, it should never be lost sight of that **interpersonal communication** is found to be more effective in final adoption of new ideas and practices. As a matter of fact, **integrated and multi-media approach** needs to be adopted in support of child survival, protection and development. Therefore in order to make best use of communication resources, there is a need for working out a well-thought out strategy, keeping in view the tasks involved, for ensuring child survival, protection and development as envisaged in the National Policy and National Plan of Action for Children.

# Case Study of Butterflies

\*Rita Panicker

## A History of Our Origin and Work

Butterflies is a programme of street and working children that has been operating since January 1988 in the Union Territory of Delhi. We have eight contact points from where we operate. All these contact points are areas where there is a concentration of street and working children. Migrant children who are self-employed shoeshine boys, ragpickers, vendors and those who are engaged in roadside restaurants or workshops, garages and small-scale industries form the focus of our programme. They work for 8 hours and in extreme cases 15 hours a day, to earn an average of Rs. 15/- (50 cents) only per day, out of which 60-70% is spent on food alone.

## Our Philosophy

Butterflies believes in the right of every child to have a full-fledged childhood, where he/she has the right to **protection, respect, opportunities, and participation** in his/her own growth and development. The core of our concern is the **child**. We give special preference to street children, with focus on girls.

Butterflies believes in the principles of democracy and community participation in decision making. Therefore, our strategy aims to ensure that children actively participate in all issues that are pertinent to them, plan future activities, monitor and critique the activities as well as the Street Educators.

## General Objectives

1. To empower street children with the knowledge and skills necessary to protect their rights as children, and provide them the necessary support and assistance for reinstatement in their families where possible, and help them develop as respected and productive citizens.
2. To use Convention on the Rights of the Child as a major tool for ensuring Government and public accountability for the wellbeing of all vulnerable children.

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\* Director, Butterflies, New Delhi.

## Specific Objectives

1. To organise support services to help street children in the fulfillment of his/her basic needs such as:
  - (a) Non-formal Education
  - (b) Health Care
  - (c) Recreation
2. To help and protect them from the worse excesses of exploitation.
3. To provide facilities for skill acquisition and vocational training.
4. To help and support self-help projects run by children themselves.
5. To organise children for collective action. This could take various forms - co-operatives, credit union, child workers trade union, etc.
6. Counselling
7. Ongoing documentation of the process of the programme, research studies on related issues that would have a direct bearing on policy formulation and programme refinement. Wherever possible, participatory research is being encouraged, so that children can be involved in identifying issues and problems, data collection and analysis. This strategy would also help in conscientizing and organising the children.
8. Identifying and researching on unrecognised and unexplored dimensions of child abuse, exploitation and neglect to support advocacy, policy and programme responses.
9. To bring out annually a report on status of children in India, focusing on the most vulnerable children and children of marginalised communities, to serve as a tool for social mobilisation and for giving directions for policy and programme interventions concerning protection of children's rights.
10. To undertake public awareness and social mobilisation activities on issues of exploitation and abuse (particularly sexual abuse) of children especially on occasions of specific instances of child abuse. This includes initiating or supporting registration of protests by rallies and legal action.



11. Networking with other organisations concerned with development, children's rights and those working with street and working children within the country and abroad.

### **Strategy/Approach**

There can be no blue-print of the activities to be taken up. One of the challenges of working with street children is that they evolve an activity which stems from their needs.

Reaching out to street children who have little or no family support can present special problems. It is often necessary to seek them out for reasons emanating from workplace and home alike; many of them have lost all confidence in adults because of constant abuse and exploitation. It is impossible for some children to believe that an adult approaches them without any ulterior motive or wanting anything in return. For this reason, initial contacts, offering of friendship and the building of acceptance and confidence require great skill and sensitivity on the part of the adult.

Butterflies has a team of street educators who play a singularly important role in initiating contact with street children through regular visits to their places of work and stay, making it a point to say 'hello', spend time with them, and occasionally organise some recreational and group activities depending on their mood that would break the initial fear and mistrust, and grow into **establishing a trusting relationship based on equity and respect.**

### **Key Objective of Butterflies**

Once the relationship has been established, the next step would be to involve them in an activity they help to develop. As said earlier, Butterflies is interested in the **child as a person** worthy of respect and admiration and therefore concentrates on building a relationship with him/her. Our experience has shown that unless we have built this relationship, it is difficult to motivate a child to come together for collective action, to continue his/her education or learn the 3 R's or for that matter discuss his drug and gambling problems.

Children participate in planning most of their activities. They also contribute materially for all their activities. Nothing is given free. We have found this strategy quite useful. Children honour their commitments and participate in the planned activity with a feeling that it is their programme and therefore they have to make it a success.

All our activities are conducted on the streets or in parks. We have no 'centres'. In terms of helping in training a child in a trade, skill or identifying space to conduct activities, etc., community resources are first tapped before approaching outsiders for help or support. We also involve school children and other youth groups in organising and conducting programmes for them. For the past two years, Springdales School is associated with us. The students from classes XI & XII visit one of our contact points twice a week. They conduct recreational, arts, crafts and functional literacy sessions.

We are in contact with about 800 children, of which 400 to 450 come regularly for our collective activities. We work through eight contact points, i.e. (1) I.N.A. Market, (2) Central Park, Connaught Place, (3) Inter-State Bus Terminus, (4) Kashmiri Gate, (5) Chandni Chowk, (6) Jama Masjid, (7) Fateh Puri, and (8) New Delhi Railway Station.

### **Programmes/Activities**

All our programmes and activities are planned and discussed with children at the Bal Sabha (Children's Council).

#### **1. Children's participation in decision making: Bal Sabha (Children's Council)**

Every fortnight, children of each contact point hold a meeting to discuss their issues, critique on-going activities, plan future activities, etc. Once a month, five representatives from each contact point come together for the Bal Sabha (Children's Council). The children elect a chairperson and the meeting is presided over by him/her. They usually have an agenda and the outlined points are discussed. One of the literate children records the minutes and decisions. Most often issues discussed are about police harassment, non-payment of wages, need for better jobs, wages, education, saving schemes, problems of gambling, drugs as well as planning of outings, etc.

Bal Sabha forms the core of our programme. It has helped in refining programme interventions and in the process of organising children, a forum has been created where they can speak, share their ideas as well as be a critique of the programmes of the organisation. Further, they also learn the principles of democracy, i.e. every person has a right to an opinion and freedom of expression, a consensus must be reached to take a final decision and that sometimes a compromise is needed.



## **2. Alternative education**

The struggle for survival is more urgent for many people of India than educational needs, therefore, education and its planning must be organically linked with the larger socio-cultural, economic and political context. Specifically, it must be linked with live issues of development. Only then will it be possible for education to play a catalytic and interventionist role.

Of the 450 street children who participate in our alternative education project, 80 per cent have never been to school. They could not afford the time nor money as they had to work for survival of the family. The remaining 20 per cent had to drop out from school to start earning. Having lived on the street for long and being a wage earner their knowledge about their work situation, environment and life itself is tremendous. Therefore, education for them would be an education for life and an education that is based on their knowledge and life experiences.

Our street educators are available at times suitable for the children. Therefore, we have day and night classes. We conduct our classes at street corners, parks and bus stations. As stated earlier, we do not have any 'centres'. By being on the street we are visible to children, so even if they are not regular, they drop by as and when they feel like it. Involvement of educators in planning, developing and producing teaching learning materials is very important to keep the interest of the educators and to help them to be resourceful, creative and innovative. Education is a two way process - learning and teaching. If educators are not open to learning then they stagnate and become dull, boring adults, adults who do not stimulate learning among children. When an educator is forced to be involved in designing the curriculum and teaching/learning materials it helps him/her to know their clientele, understand the realities in which they live and thereby become sensitive and relevant in their interaction with children.

## **3. Savings schemes**

We also have a saving scheme whereby a child is motivated to save small amounts of money every day. The child who saves regularly and does not withdraw the amount for six months is given 50% interest on the total amount saved. They are also given an individual 'bank pass book'.



#### **4. Credit Union**

We began with a savings scheme to inculcate the habit of saving among children. However for the past five years we have on regular basis held discussions with children on collective bargaining power. Two months ago, August 1995 to be precise, the children from ISBT contact area finally took the decision to form a Credit Union. Each member pays Rs. 2/- per day towards his/her share capital. Today two months later there are 100 members in the Credit Union. Children are hoping to get more of their friends to join the Credit Union. Their hope is to have at least 600 members. With the initial membership of 100, they will have a monthly capital of Rs. 5,600/- and an annual capital of Rs. 67,200/-. The objective of the Credit Union is to give various services to their members, e.g. education, vocational training, health/medical care and credit to start economic enterprises.

#### **5. Quarterly camps/Get togethers**

Children of all contact points come together once in a month to spend time together in recreational and cultural activities. Here they have an opportunity to be a "child" once again.

#### **6. Health care**

Apart from the curative treatment such as street medication, admission to hospitals, we have a promotive and preventive approach to health wherein we give health education on specific topics such as personal hygiene, common diseases, knowledge of one's body, effects of drugs and sexually transmitted diseases, AIDS, etc. We have a mobile health team that goes regularly to our contact areas. The health project will eventually be a cooperative owned by the children. Presently the children are deciding on the membership criteria, rules and regulations, membership fee, etc. Child health workers have been identified and they are being given training to be health workers.

#### **7. Counselling**

This is part of our regular work. The street educator usually identifies a few difficult cases and takes them on as case-work clients.

## **8. Meals on Wheels - Butterflies Restaurant**

When we initially thought of this project, we decided that if this project is to become successful, then it is important to get the approval of the children as well as their participation in planning out the details of the project.

Innumerable meetings were held by the children to discuss the running and managing of the restaurant. They decided initially that 12 boys will be absorbed by the restaurant, slowly increasing the number as business grows. The group also discussed their work schedules, punctuality, cleanliness, responsibility to do their share of work, and also to collectively take responsibility in managing the restaurant.

The restaurant is being managed well. There have been occasions when there have been no adult supervisors for long periods and the children have managed the restaurant superbly, to the extent of even making more earnings than usual! Bhagwan Singh was fourteen year old when he became the Assistant Manager but he also has to take turns in working in the kitchen, scullery, as a waiter or a solicitor for customers outside the restaurant.

## **9. Street Child Educator**

Potential leaders from among the group are identified who could then be absorbed into our team as street educators. As of November 1991, Darshan, a shoe shiner, and Ashraf, a porter, have joined our team as street educators. They are proving to be excellent. Manoj an ex-porter has joined the administration and is being groomed to be an administrator.

## **10. Bal Mazdoor Union : Towards collective action by children**

The direct outcome of having the Bal Sabha (Children's Council) has been the formation of a Child Worker's Union. One of the major problems faced by street children is harassment from police and shop keepers, i.e. employers. Quite often, children are beaten up on false charges of theft and street brawls. Each time a crisis situation arose at the children's work place, especially with the children at INA market, we used the opportunity to discuss the need for solidarity amongst them as well as the strength that is derived from unity, and suggested the importance of forming their union.



An incident in August 1991 at the INA market was catalytic in initiating the formation of the Bal Mazdoor Union. A boy Vijay, was beaten up by his employer on charges of theft. When Vijay denied the accusation, he was further beaten. Vijay in a spurt of anger, slapped the employer, which created a furore and all the shopkeepers and the police joined hands and bashed up all the coolie boys. That evening, the children called an emergency meeting and passed a resolution that they would form a union. Thus was born the Bal Mazdoor Union ( Child Worker's Union).

By then it had taken four years for the children to finally accept the importance of collective action and the need for a union.

In 1992, the Bal Mazdoor Union applied to the Registrar of Trade Unions to register itself as a union. Its application was however rejected on the grounds that as per Section 21 of the Trade Union Act of 1925, no person below the age of 15 is allowed to either form a union or become a member of it. It was pointed out to the Registrar that the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 had recognised children as workers (children engaged in various occupations) and the basic right of any "workers" is to form a union for their own protection against exploitation. This argument did not convince the Registrar. Thus the Bal Mazdoor Union filed a **writ petition** in the Delhi High Court stating that the section be struck down on the grounds of it being ultra vires to the Constitution. The petition was not accepted and dismissed at the admission stage itself.

The Children's Union then moved the Supreme Court via a **special leave petition**, on November 15th 1993. The Supreme Court admitted the petition on the strength of Article 15 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which recognises the right of children '**to freedom of association and to freedom of peaceful assembly**'. On admitting the petition, the Supreme Court issued notice to the three respondents, namely the Government of India, the Registrar of Trade Unions and the Lt. Governor of Delhi. The case is still awaiting hearing.

### **Issues of concern to the Bal Mazdoor Union**

The Bal Mazdoor Union sees itself as a collective of street and working children. It is a platform of and for children who are denied their access to basic rights which have been guaranteed to each and every child in India by the Constitution of our country and the Convention on the Rights of the Child which has been ratified by the Government of India. The Union seeks to educate and conscientise children regarding their rights both as children and as workers. It is important to point out that the **Union is concerned about the situations of abuse and/or denial of access to basic**



**fundamental rights**, such as the right to a childhood, i.e. right to education, right to recreation and leisure, the right to respect and opportunities, the right to shelter and health care, the right to be protected from exploitation and oppression, and the right to demand the implementation of all legislations relating to the protection of children and their rights with regard to **all children**, especially the disadvantaged and the most vulnerable. The Bal Mazdoor Union's aim and commitment is not to negotiate for better wages or working conditions, but to mobilise public opinion to redress conditions and pressures that force them to work, including the situation of poverty and unemployment of their families.

The Bal Mazdoor Union in its various collective actions has highlighted the situation of children in this larger context. the Bal Mazdoor Union has brought to the attention of people the callous death of 15 year old Zaffar Imam by his employer in April 1994, the deaths of three street children because of medical negligence at the Observation Home at Delhi Gate in May 1994, as well as its protest over the brutal deaths of Gond tribal women and children in Nagpur by police in December 1994.

In the case of Zaffar Imam, the Bal Mazdoor Union through its dialogue with the Chief Minister of Delhi was able to change the charge on the accused employer from Section 307 of the IPC (which relates to attempt to murder) to a murder charge (Section 302 of the IPC). Further, on behalf of the child's parents, the Bal Mazdoor Union has filed a case in the Delhi High Court for compensation for a sum of Rs. 10,80,000.

### **Children's Unionisation and the Debate on It as a Strategy towards Elimination of Child Labour**

The Child Workers Union as a strategy towards elimination of child labour has its own share of supporters as well as opponents.

Those who oppose the unionisation of child workers do so on the following counts. They believe that (a) children are not mature enough to discuss and decide on issues pertaining to their lives; (b) unionisation in fact legalises and institutionalises child labour and (c) it is an unnecessary effort to politicise children.

It is ironic that children are not considered 'minor' when they are forced to do adult jobs including working in hazardous occupations (match factories, fireworks, glass, gem polishing, lock industry, mines, construction, carpet industry, etc.) Besides, they also work longer hours than adults and are paid less wages than adults. Some of these children are the breadwinners of their families. However, when it comes to giving them power to make their own decisions, they are suddenly seen as incapable and being too young to shoulder this responsibility.

Most of the opponents to this strategy seem to forget the fact that child labour has existed and continues to exist because of the political decisions and economic policies of our rulers. Thus politics, in the widest sense of the term, is responsible for the very existence of child labour. In India, unions have alliances with various political parties and their priorities have been narrowly focused on agitations for higher wages and better conditions of work. Wider social concerns which touch the very basis of child labour have not been on their agenda. But this need not necessarily be so. An informed trade union movement, with a broad socio-political vision can be effective and children can certainly be trusted to fight for their rights as child workers without allowing themselves to be dragged into narrow politicking.

There are still others who feel that this unionising and organising is too much of a burden on the young child workers and that adults should fight for the child workers' rights.

But forty five years of independence has shown that adults and leaders of our society have failed children miserably. It is therefore important that children themselves speak out and organise themselves to protect their own rights.

On the other hand, those in favour of unionizing child workers argue that the reality is that millions of children have been working and the Government recognizing this reality enacted the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act 1986. The Act does not commit itself to the elimination of child labour except in certain hazardous industries and aims at regulating the conditions of work in other industries and bring about uniformity in the various laws relating to child labour.



There is another spin off in organising unions of child workers, which can contribute effectively to prevention and elimination of child labour. When child workers' unions demand for wages equal to adults, better working conditions and other benefits which are given to organised adult workers and also additional facilities related to the development needs of children (e.g. education, health, etc.) then child labour will no more be cheap. It will not then be an attractive proposition for their employers.

The spirit of Article 15 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child further strengthens the children's right to form associations to secure their rights.

Finally, on the part of Butterflies and the children who constitute the Child Workers Union, unionisation is a clear expression of children's participation and empowerment. Unionising child workers is a commitment to the protection of child's rights rather than enhancing facilities and conditions of child's work.

Convention on the Rights of the Child is a clear opportunity to the Government, NGOs and the society at large to begin seeing children as individuals with rights like any other citizen, not merely as objects of charity and philanthropy. Our commitment should be to empower the children with knowledge of their rights, and equip them to protect their rights, while the society ensures an environment that will facilitate the protection of all rights of all children.

### **Documentation Research and Advocacy**

Butterflies, realising the importance of advocacy, research and documentation, has been involved in doing relevant research in areas of child development, as well as collate data on children. We quite often get requests from NGOs, government departments, researchers and training institutes for data, documents, etc. We are also involved in formulating the alternate report to that of Government of India on the Status of the Indian Child vis-a-vis Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which will be presented to the Government of India and the Committee on Child's Rights in Geneva. As part of this



initiative in preparing the alternate report, we also involved 1,25,000 school children from all over the country to send us replies to a poster-cum-questionnaire on what they perceive as their rights and denial of rights. The poster was translated into 13 regional languages. This initiative of ours had two objectives - (1) it educated children about the CRC and what are Government's responsibilities in ensuring those rights, and (2) they also gave us a feedback as to what they thought about it. Nearly 10,000 children responded. We hope to bring it out as a special report. The Documentation Research and Advocacy Centre (DRAC) publishes a quarterly child file called '**My Name is Today**' - which is a subject-wise compilation of news items about children from various Indian and foreign newspapers, journals and magazines. DRAC also brings out advocacy materials on **child's rights** on a regular basis.

# **Community Based Convergent Services (CBCS) : A Case Study of NAARI CHETNA with New Holistic Approach**

**\* Dr. A.K Sinha**

**Community Based Convergent Services (CBCS)** is a major challenge to both the Government and NGOs, as well as to all those who are involved directly in development activities. Community mobilisation, specially that of women is a key to the success of any programme related to the felt need of the community and their children. The primary aim of CBCS is to bridge the gap between the service provider and the community.

## **What is CBCS?**

It is a holistic approach for convergence of services for the development of women and children meeting at the community level. It is not another programme of the Government.

## **Purpose of CBCS**

The purpose of CBCS is to encourage flexibility in service approach, so that development programmes become more relevant to the needs of women and children.

## **Objectives of CBCS**

- \* To reduce infant mortality rate
- \* To reduce under 5 mortality rate
- \* To reduce maternal mortality rate
- \* Reduce morbidity of infants and children
- \* Promote universal access to drinking water
- \* Increase social acceptance of sanitary practices
- \* Enhance the nutritional well being of children, adolescent girls and women
- \* Improve opportunities for basic education for all women and children and increase attendance of children in primary schools
- \* Reduce the proportion of early marriage of girls in the age group of 10-19 years

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\* Director, National Rural Development Society, Patna, Bihar

- \* Improve social and economic opportunities for women
- \* Reduce disparities in social and economic development of males and females

### **Present Programmes Based on Holistic Approach**

- i) ICDS - for child development, health and nutrition of mother.
- ii) DWCRA - Income Generation Programme for poor women, literacy, health, family welfare and nutrition.

In fact, due to missing elements, the desired results of ICDS and DWCRA have not been achieved.

### **Lacunae/Missing Elements**

- i) Lack of awareness among beneficiaries.
- ii) Lack of participation by community organizations like mahila mandals, panchayats, co-operatives, etc.
- iii) Lack of proper orientation towards programmes among beneficiaries and government staff.
- iv) Lack of relevance of many of the programmes to the needs of the community at large, and poor women and children in particular.

### **Necessary Efforts Required to Overcome These Missing Elements**

- i) Generating awareness among people about the situation.
- ii) Encouraging participation of the community in decision making process.
- iii) Orientation to line staff and mahila mandals, panchayats, local NGOs.



iv) Co-ordination at various levels from village to national level.

### **Role of State Governments**

i) Recommending new districts for starting pilot projects with CBCS approach.

ii) Review of progress in the districts selected.

iii) Problem solving.

iv) Reallocation of resources to meet the demands of the existing situation.

v) Any other matters dealing with implementation of the scheme.

### **Role of the Government of India**

A Steering Committee has been set up by the Government of India, with the Ministry of Rural Development taking on the nodal role. It consists of representatives of Ministries/Departments of Women and Child Development, Education, Health, Food, Urban Development and UNICEF. It deals with the following activities -

i) Policy formulation.

ii) Approval of district recommended by the State Government.

iii) Review of progress.

iv) Problem solving.

v) Allocation of resources in consultation with UNICEF.

## Pilot Districts

With a view to establish validity of CBCS approach, initially 13 districts in India have been short listed as pilot districts on the basis of recommendation of the State Government in consultation with the Central Government Departments/ Ministries and UNICEF.

	Name of District	Name of State	Lead Programme
1.	West Champaran	Bihar	Urban development
2.	Alapuzha	Kerala	UBS
3.	Anantapur	Andhra Pradesh	DWCRA
4.	Mysore	Karnataka	Rural sanitation
5.	Udaipur	Rajasthan	Drinking water mission
6.	Hoshangabad	Madhya Pradesh	ICDS
7.	Hooghly	West Bengal	ICDS
8.	Dhenkenal	Orissa	DWCRA
9.	Sirsa	Haryana	ICDS
10.	Dubre	Assam	DWCRA
11.	Allahabad	Uttar Pradesh	Not identified
12.	Nashik	Maharashtra	Not identified
13.	Periyar	Tamil Nadu	Rural sanitation

## Planning and Implementation:

- Selection of pilot districts
- District planning workshop
- Preparation of action plan
- Baseline survey
- Fixing of responsibilities for tasks identified
- Training of trainers for community action
- Forming/activising women's groups at community level
- Training of field functionaries
- Orientation of community leaders
- Monitoring
- Review

## **Co-ordination**

The Collector will co-ordinate all activities of this pilot project for convergence of services at the community level. For this purpose, Collectors set up a Taskforce consisting of officers of all Departments concerned, voluntary agencies and community organisations. The Collector takes a lead role in co-ordination and intervention to remove difficulties.

## **Convenor of the Pilot Project**

The Lead Programme Officer discharges the responsibilities of the Taskforce as the Convenor of the Pilot Project.

## **Important Taskforce Activities**

- i) Identifying major problems of women and children.
- ii) Identifying suitable NGOs/voluntary agencies for awareness generation.
- iii) Identifying groups of poor women.
- iv) Utilizing existing groups such as ICDS, DWCRA, UBS, NLM, etc. for awareness generation.
- v) Orientation of District level officials and NGOs about the CBCS approach.
- vi) Orientation of community/women's groups, such as mahila mandals, panchayats, local co-operatives, etc.
- vii) Training field functionaries to respond to the felt needs of the community.
- viii) Preparation of plan of action based on articulated needs of women and children.
- ix) Monitoring and reporting progress of the programme to District Co-ordinator.

This Pilot Project was started when a sanitation programme under the research and development wing of NRDS was going on in the urban slums and the rural areas of Patna District. We found a few women interested in social development activities in Dhanaut. Dhanaut is a Panchayat under Danapur block of Patna District. During the course of our contact drive and discussions with them on their felt needs, the talent of a few women to form women's groups came to the fore.



With this in view, a pilot project 'Naari Chetna' was initiated by NRDS at Dhanaut.

Under the pilot project initially a group of 18 women was formed. The group was christened as "Naari Chetna". With a view to respond to the felt needs of the community, they were motivated and trained about the methods of generating group awareness and about benefits of convergence of services.

After two months, two members of "Naari Chetna" engaged themselves in making 'sattu'. The idea of 'sattu making' and its 'marketing' was given by us which was then discussed in their group and accepted unanimously. Then two women, who were possessing 'zanta' (grinders) engaged themselves in the production of 'sattu'. Sattu is being sold to 'Naari Chetna' @ Rs. 22/- per kg. Naari Chetna sells it door to door or in the market through other members @ Rs. 26/- per kg. The profit margin is Rs. 4/- per kg. Other poor members who are engaged in marketing of sattu get 10% commission on the selling price, i.e. Rs. 2.60p per kg. The net gain to Naari Chetna is (Rs. 4.00 Rs.2.60) = Rs.1.40 paise per kg. In this way through Sattu making Naari Chetna has been able to find a way to create a fund for the community.

Other women were watching the activities of these members. After 4 months Naari Chetna started a contact drive and arranged a few meetings in their panchayat area. NRDS members participated in all the meetings. During this period, about 92 other poor women joined Naari Chetna. Naari Chetna in their subsequent meeting passed the following resolutions -

1. There shall be 3 macro groups in Naari Chetna.
2. The maximum number of members of each group shall be 40
3. Each macro group shall comprise 8 micro groups.
4. Each micro group shall have a maximum of 5 women.
5. Each member will have to pay Rs. 1/- per week as contribution to Naari Chetna.
6. Each micro group will meet once every week and will discuss their problems.
7. Each micro group will meet every alternate monday (once every fortnight) and will discuss their problems threadbare.
8. An account of Naari Chetna will be opened in the Post Office or Bank.

9. The micro groups will each have a distinct name, viz., 'Sakhi', 'Saheli', and 'Bahna'.

10. 'Naari Chetna' will now be registered as a federation of 'Sakhi', 'Saheli' and 'Bahna' and will work together for upliftment of women.

11. Each group will take initiatives for launching income generation programmes, enrolment of their children in primary schools, care and education of girl children, etc.

In pursuance of the **resolution** passed in a **general body meeting** of Naari Chetna the following actions have been taken :-

1. 3 Macro groups were formed and named as 'SAKHI', 'SAHELI' and 'BAHNA' respectively.

2. Micro groups and macro groups are meeting weekly and fortnightly in a regular manner.

3. Members are paying contribution amount @ Rs. 1/- per week.

4. Account of Naari Chetna has been opened in a nearby post office.

5. Naari Chetna has now become a federation of 'Sakhi', 'Saheli' and 'Bahna' groups.

6. The various programmes being undertaken are -

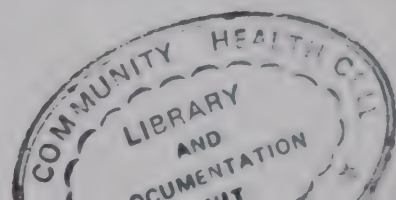
#### A. Income Generation Programme

(i) Sattu making and its marketing.

(ii) 20 Members of Naari Chetna have been trained by KVIC, Government of India for manufacturing incense sticks (agarbatti). Very soon they are going to start production of agarbattis.

#### B. Literacy Programme

Literate women of Naari Chetna have taken the initiative to make others literate. To begin with, they are making their own fellow women of Naari Chetna literate. Till date 30 women have benefitted from this literacy drive.





### C. Immunization Programme

Group leaders have fixed dates in consultation with Block Medical Officer Incharge of Danapur and the local ANM for immunization cum health camps. These camps are now being organised by them at regular intervals. About 140 children have been immunised and 40 women have benefitted from the free medical check-ups.

### D. Enrolment of Boys and Girls in Government Primary School

Three boys and 5 girls have been enrolled during the first attempt. Group leaders are preparing a list of children in the age group 6-10 years who are not attending school, have not been admitted in school or have dropped out. They will ensure their enrolment in the Government Primary School.

Naari Chetna has now come of age. Interest and enthusiasm evinced by the women of Naari Chetna is a pointer to the fact that self reliance is the key to development. They are discussing their problems and are keenly desirous to educate their children and themselves. Environmental sanitation, economic sustainability and primary health care services for the community have also now become the centre of their focus. They have made contact and established a good working relationship with the Block Medical Officer and his team, and have demanded better health service in their areas, resulting in a fortnightly visit by ANM as well as visits by Medical Officer as and when required. The doctors and para-medical staff of Danapur Block have deeply appreciated the efforts of Naari Chetna and they are keen to emulate the ideas in other areas as well.

In a group meeting, they also contacted the headmasters of local Government primary school and private schools and demanded better quality education for their children, and convinced them about the need to educate them regarding health, hygiene and environmental sanitation as well. They urged them to start environmental sanitation programme at the school level. As a result, the construction of two low cost toilets became possible. The construction of these toilets was a unique event as it involved active participation of teachers and students.

In this way, Naari Chetna has adopted a holistic approach of CBCS for quick redressal of the problems voiced by their groups or community. They have set a good example for other women's groups/communities to follow.



## **APPENDICES**



**PROGRAMME SCHEDULE**

**Networking with NGOs Working for Children  
and Women : A National Consultative Meet  
26-27 October 1995**

**26 October 1995, Thursday**

9.00 - 9.30 a.m

Registration

9.30 - 10.45 a.m

**Inaugural Session**  
P.H.D House

Welcome

Dr. Adarsh Sharma  
Director I/C, NIPCCD

Presidential Address  
Smt. Sarala Gopalan  
Secretary, DWCD

Release of Sampark,  
&  
Inaugural Address by  
Kum. Vimla Verma  
Minister of State, DWCD

Address by  
Dr. Jon Rohde  
UNICEF, Country  
Representative

Vote of Thanks  
Rita Punhani  
Deputy Director, NIPCCD

10.45 - 11.00 a.m

Tea Break

**Session I**

11.00 - 1.00 p.m

**Networking with NGOs Working  
for Children and Women : Some  
Conceptual Issues**

Chairperson : Smt. Vidyaben Shah  
Chairman  
Central Social Welfare Board  
New Delhi



(11.00 - 12.00 noon)

**Government-NGO Network for  
Development of Children &  
Women : The Need**

Smt. Binoo Sen  
Joint Secretary  
Department of Women & Child  
Development  
New Delhi.

(12.00 - 1.00 p.m)

**Strengthening Inter-departmental  
and Government-NGO Linkages for  
Integrated Women and Child  
Development**

Dr. S.Y. Quraishi  
Joint Secretary  
Department of Youth Affairs  
and Sports  
New Delhi.

1.00 - 2.00 p.m

Lunch

**Session II**

2.00 - 3.00 p.m

**Areas and Scope of  
Networking with NGOs :  
A Brainstorming Session**

Chairperson :

Shri Rajesh Tandon  
Director  
Society for Participatory  
Research in Asia, New Delhi

3.00 - 3.15 p.m

Tea Break

**Session III**

3.15 - 5.30 p.m

**Intervention Programmes by  
Voluntary Sector for  
Development of Children and  
Women**

Chairperson :

Dr. M Khalakdina

(3.15 - 4.15 p.m) \*

**Networking for Promotion of  
Child Health and Nutrition**

Dr. Arun Gupta  
National Co-ordinator (BPNI)  
Breastfeeding Promotion  
Network of India  
New Delhi

(4.15 - 5.30 p.m) \*

**Community Mobilisation and  
and Empowerment for Child  
Survival, Protection and  
Development : An Experience  
of Ramakrishna Mission  
Lokasiksha Parishad in Health  
and Sanitation**

Prof. S Chakravorty  
Director  
Ramakrishna Mission Lokasiksha  
Parishad, Narendrapur  
West Bengal

6.00 - 7.00 p.m

**Presentation by Bhartiya Lok  
Kala Mandal, Udaipur**

**27 October 1995, Friday**

**Session IV**

9.00 - 12.30 p.m

**Schemes and Programmes for  
Children and Women**

Chairperson :

Smt. Binoo Sen  
Joint Secretary  
Department of Women & Child  
Development  
New Delhi.

**Assistance for Schemes and  
Programmes Related to Children**

Smt. C R Chibber  
Director (Admn.),  
Department of Women & Child  
Development  
New Delhi.

**Assistance for Schemes and  
Programmes Related to Women**

Shri Vijay Bhaskar  
Deputy Secretary  
Department of Women & Child  
Development  
New Delhi.

11.00 - 11.15 a.m

Tea Break

(11.00 - 11.45 a.m)

**Constraints in Implementing  
Govt. Schemes and Programmes**

Dr. S N Chaudhuri  
Director, CINI  
Daulatpur, Via Joka  
West Bengal

11.45 - 12.30 p.m

**Formulating Proposals for  
Financial Assistance for  
Projects Related to Welfare  
and Development of Children  
and Women**

Shri Nagendra Nath  
Joint Director, NIPCCD,  
New Delhi

12.30- 1.00 p.m

**Community Mobilisation : An  
Experience of Nehru Yuvak  
Sangathan**

Shri Chandrashekhar Pran  
Project Director  
Nehru Yuvak Sangathan  
Lucknow.

1.00 - 1.30 p.m

**Suggestions for Strengthening  
GO-NGO Network**

Smt. Deepika Shrivastava  
Programme Officer  
UNICEF  
New Delhi.

1.30 - 2.30 p.m

Lunch

**Session V**

2.30 - 3.15 p.m

**Role of Media for Child Survival,  
Protection and Development**

Prof. J S Yadava  
Director  
Indian Institute of Mass  
Communication, New Delhi.

3.15 - 3.30 p.m

Tea Break

**Session VI**



3.30 - 4.45 p.m

**Experiences in Child  
Welfare - Case Studies**

(3.30-4.15 p.m)

**Butterflies : A Case Study**

Ms. Rita Panicker Pinto  
Director  
BUTTERFLIES, New Delhi

4.15 - 4.45 p.m

**Activities of NRDS**

Dr. A K Sinha  
Director  
National Rural Development  
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## **Session VII**

4.45 - 6.00 p.m

**Suggestions for Strengthening  
GO-NGO Network - Group Discussion**

Chairperson :

Dr. Adarsh Sharma  
Additional Director  
NIPCCD, New Delhi.

6.00 p.m

**Valedictory**

Valedictory Address  
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## List of Background Material

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